

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

Sub B1 1. A system for eliciting responses from members of a broadcast audience comprising:

a plurality of broadcast stations including means at individual ones of said broadcast stations for generating a set of disparate local programs for broadcast from said plurality of broadcast stations, each of said broadcast stations broadcasting a sequence of segments of said local programs separated by time slots;

a multiplicity of receiving stations for receiving local programs from said broadcast stations and for presenting said local programs to members of the broadcast audience;

means for transmitting a sequence of network programs to each of said broadcast stations for broadcast to said members of the audience, programs of said sequence of network programs having a duration shorter than or equal to individual ones of said time slots, said network programs including tasks to be performed by members of the audience;

means at said broadcast stations for selecting individual ones of said network programs to be interspersed among successive ones of said local program segments for broadcast to said audience;

means at each of said receiving stations for enabling members of the audience to enter a response to said tasks;

means for providing an instructional signal including response criteria to enable evaluation of responses of members of the audience;

means for evaluating the responses of members of the audience in accordance with the response criteria to identify individual members of the audience who have entered acceptable responses;

a station for designating a winner among members of the audience who have entered an acceptable response; and

wherein said response criteria have been established prior to entry of the responses by members of the audience, said evaluating means includes means for altering a mode of evaluation in response to said instructional signal, and wherein said instructional signal can be generated to activate said altering means of said evaluation means independently of a communication of said sequence of network programs.

2. A system according to Claim 1 further comprising a plurality of telephone hubs for receiving ^{the} responses of ^{the} members of the audience and for communicating acceptable ones of said responses to said winner-designating station.

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B 3. A system according to Claim 2 further comprising a plurality of telephone hubs wherein said response-enabling means includes a telephone.

4. A system according to Claim 2 wherein there are a plurality of said evaluating means, individual ones of said evaluating means being located at respective ones of said receiving stations.

5. A system according to Claim 2 wherein there are a plurality of said evaluating means, individual ones of said evaluating means being located at sites remote from said receiving stations.

6. A system according to Claim 5 wherein individual ones of said evaluating means are located at said telephone hubs.

B 7. A system according to Claim 6 wherein each of said telephone hubs includes means for storing data including ^{the} response criteria for use by said evaluating means.

8. A system according to Claim 2 wherein there are a plurality of said evaluating means, individual ones of said evaluating means being located at individual ones of said receiving stations and including means for outputting a print-out record of a response entered by a member of the audience.

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9. A system according to Claim 8 wherein each of said evaluating means includes means for storing response criteria, and means for comparing an entered response with an acceptable response.

10. A system according to Claim 9 wherein said transmitting means includes a base station for transmitting network programs and a communication means coupling said base station to said broadcast stations, said criteria-providing means being located at said base station for transmission of the scoring criteria via said communication means to said broadcast stations, said broadcast stations transmitting said response criteria to said receiving stations for use by said evaluating means.

11. A system according to Claim 2 wherein said local programs and said network programs are synchronized to allow for a network program to be broadcast within one of said time slots.

B 12. A system according to Claim 11 wherein the network programs include an additional ^{network} program longer than one of said time slots, at least a portion of said additional network program being broadcast concurrently with a portion of a local program via a television broadcast incorporating a split-screen technique.

B 13. A system according to Claim 2 wherein said transmitting means includes a base station for transmitting ^{the} network programs, and a communication

means coupling said base station to said broadcast stations.

14. A system according to Claim 13 wherein said communication means comprises a satellite communication link or a fiber optic communication link.

B 15. A system according to Claim 13 wherein said criteria-providing means is located at said base station, and said transmitting means transmits said instructional signal and ^{the} response criteria from said criteria-providing means to said broadcast stations for transmission to said telephone hubs.

16. A system according to Claim 13 further comprising a telephone link connecting said telephone hubs to said base station.

B 17. A system according to Claim 16 wherein ^{instructional signal} said ~~criteria-providing~~ means are located at said base station, and said telephone link provides for communication of said instructional signal and ^{the} response criteria from said ^{instructional signal} ~~criteria-providing~~ means to said telephone hubs.

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B 18. A system according to Claim 16 wherein said winner-designating station is included within said base station, and said telephone link provides for communication of ^{the} acceptable responses and identification of persons making said acceptable responses to said winner-designating station.

19. A system according to Claim 2 further comprising means for recording said instructional signal prior to transmission of a corresponding network program, a recording of said instructional signal being provided to each of said telephone hubs and identified as to the corresponding network program.

20. A system according to Claim 19 wherein there are a plurality of said evaluating means, individual ones of said evaluating means being located at respective ones of said telephone hubs.

21. A system according to Claim 1 wherein there are a plurality of said evaluating means, individual ones of said evaluating means being located at respective ones of said receiving stations.

22. A system according to Claim 21 wherein said evaluating means includes a printer for outputting a print-out of a response of a member of the audience including identification of the member of the audience and identification of the evaluating means.

Sub B³ 23. A system according to Claim 21 wherein each of said evaluating means includes ~~means for~~ storing response criteria, and ~~means for~~ comparing an entered response with an acceptable response.

24. A system according to Claim 23 wherein ~~transmitting~~ means includes a base station for

transmitting network programs and a communication means coupling said base station to said broadcast stations, said criteria-providing means being located at said base station for transmission of the scoring criteria via said communication means to said broadcast stations, said broadcast stations transmitting said response criteria to said receiving stations for use by said evaluating means, said network means communicating said instructional signal from said base stations to said broadcast stations for transmission to said receiving stations.

25. A system according to Claim 1 wherein said local programs and said network programs are synchronized to allow for a network program to be broadcast within one of said time slots.

B 26. A system according to Claim 25 wherein the network programs include an additional ^{network} program longer than one of said time slots, at least a portion of said additional network program being broadcast concurrently with a portion of a local program via a television broadcast incorporating a split-screen technique.

B 27. A system according to Claim 1 wherein said transmitting means includes a base station for transmitting ^{the} network programs, and a communication means coupling said base station to said broadcast stations.

28. A system according to Claim 27 wherein

said communication means comprises a satellite communication link or a fiber optic communication link.

29. A system according to Claim 28 wherein said criteria-providing means is located at said base station, and said transmitting means transmits said instructional signal and ^{the} response criteria from said criteria-providing means to said broadcast stations for transmission to said receiving stations.

30. A system according to Claim 1 further comprising a base station coupled by said transmitting means to said broadcast stations, means located at said base station for generating said network programs, and wherein said means for providing said instructional signal and said response criteria is located at said base station, and said transmitting means transmits said instructional signal in conjunction with said network programs to said broadcast stations.

31. A system according to Claim 1 wherein said network programs and said instructional signal are prerecorded prior to communication of said network programs and said instructional signal to said broadcast stations, said local programs and said network programs and said response criteria being synchronized to allow for a network program to be broadcast within one of said time slots.

Sub ^{BT} 32. A system for eliciting responses from

members of a broadcast audience comprising:

a plurality of broadcast stations including means at individual ones of said broadcast stations for transmitting a sequence of local program or segments of the local programs;

a multiplicity of receiving stations for receiving local programs from said broadcast stations and for presenting said local programs to members of the broadcast audience;

means for providing a sequence of network programs to each of said broadcast stations, each of said network programs including a task to be performed by members of the audience;

means at each of said broadcast stations for inserting a network program of said sequence of network programs between segments of said local programs;

means at each of said receiving stations for enabling members of the audience to enter a response to a task provided by a network program;

means for providing a response criteria to enable evaluation of responses of members of the audience;

means employing said response criteria for evaluating the responses of members of the audience in accordance with the response criteria to

identify individual members of the audience who have entered an acceptable response; and

a station for designating a winner among members of the audience who have entered an acceptable response.

B 33. A system according to Claim 32 wherein said inserting means includes means for selecting one or more of said network programs to be transmitted concurrently with a sequence of ^{the} local program segments.

CB 34. A system according to Claim 33 wherein ^a said concurrent transmission is accomplished via interspersing at least a portion of ^{the} a network program among successive local programs or successive segments of a local program in said sequence of transmitted local programs.

Sub B5 35. A system according to Claim 33 wherein said concurrent transmission of local and network programs is accomplished by transmitting said local and said network programs via a television transmission, and by providing at least a portion of a network program in split-screen format with at least a portion of a local program.

C 36. A system according to Claim 32 further comprising a plurality of telephone hubs for receiving ^{the} responses of ^{the} members of the audience and for communicating acceptable ones of said responses to said winner-designating station.

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37. A system according to Claim 36 wherein said inserting means includes means for selecting individual ones of said network programs to be transmitted concurrently with ^{the} a sequence of said local programs at an individual one of said broadcast stations, and wherein ^a said concurrent transmission of ^{the} sequences of local and network programs by one of said broadcast stations is accomplished by either an interspersing of ^{the} a network program between successive segments of a local program or by transmission of said local and said network programs as a split-screen television broadcast.

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38. A method for eliciting responses from members of a broadcast audience comprising:

broadcasting from each of a plurality of broadcast stations, distant from each other, a set of local programs;

receiving said local programs at a multiplicity of receiving stations by members of a broadcast audience;

providing said broadcast stations with a sequence of network programs, said network programs including tasks to be performed by members of the audience;

selecting, at individual ones of said broadcast stations, a network program from said sequence of network programs to be interspersed

between successive programs or successive segments of a program in the sets of local programs;

interspersing a selected network program among successive local programs or successive segments of a local program broadcast from an individual one of said broadcast stations;

enabling members of the audience to enter responses to a task of a network program;

providing apparatus for evaluating a response of a member of the audience;

generating an instructional signal including response criteria for use by said evaluating apparatus in evaluating the responses of audience members to determine the presence of a correct response;

providing a station for selection of a winner among members of the audience who have entered a correct response; and

communicating identities of members who have entered correct responses to said winner-selection station.

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39. A method according to Claim 38 wherein said response criteria have been established prior to entry of the responses by members of the audience, said evaluating means includes means for altering a mode of evaluation in response to said

instructional signal, and said instructional signal can be generated to activate said altering means of said evaluation means independently of the providing of said sequence of network programs.

40. A method according to Claim 38 wherein said step of communicating identities is accomplished by means of at least one telephone hub interconnecting said receiving stations with said winner-selection station.

41. A method according to Claim 38 wherein said step of providing a sequence of network programs includes a step of prerecording the sequence of network programs as a network-program recording.

Sub 13 42. A method according to Claim 41 wherein said step of providing the sequence of network programs further comprises a step of positing copies of the network-program recording at various ones of said broadcast stations for synchronized playback of the network-program recordings at said plurality of broadcast stations.

43. A method according to Claim 38 wherein said step of providing said sequence of network programs includes a step of transmitting said sequence of network programs via a communication system to said plurality of broadcast stations.

44. A method according to Claim 38 wherein there is a plurality of evaluating apparatuses,

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individual ones of said evaluating apparatuses being located at individual ones of said receiving stations, said method further comprising a step of transmitting said instructional signal from said broadcast stations to said receiving stations to accomplish said evaluating of ^{the} responses at individual ones of said receiving stations.

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45. A method according to Claim 38 wherein said evaluating apparatus is located at a site remote from a plurality of said receiving stations for evaluating ^{the} responses of ^{the} audience members located at said plurality of receiving stations.

46. A method according to Claim 38 wherein said step of communicating identities of audience members is accomplished by at least one telephone hub interconnecting a plurality of said receiving stations with said winner-selection station, there being a plurality of evaluating apparatuses with one evaluating apparatus being located at each of said telephone hubs for evaluating responses communicated from individual ones of said receiving stations to said telephone hubs, and wherein the method includes a step of communicating said instructional signal to each of said telephone hubs for use by respective ones of said evaluating apparatus to accomplish evaluation of audience response at a location remote from said receiving stations.

47. A method according to Claim 46 wherein said step of generating the instructional signal

c includes a step of recording said instructional signal as a response-criteria recording prior to an evaluating of audience response, there being a step of keying ^{the} a response-criteria recording to a network task for applying correct response criteria to a specific task.

Sub 48. A method according to Claim 38 further comprising a step of printing out a hard-copy record of a response of an audience member, said evaluating of audience response including a scoring of a response by an audience member, the scoring appearing in the hard copy.

Sub 49. A method according to Claim 38 wherein said step of interspersing is accomplished by separating successive ones of said local programs or segments of said local programs by timing slots, and inserting a network program in the time slot.

Sub 50. A method according to Claim 49 further comprising a step of synchronizing the network programs of the sequence of network programs with the occurrences of time slots in the sequences of local programs of the broadcast stations, thereby allowing for a presentation of a network program concurrently to audience members receiving broadcast transmissions from numerous ones of said broadcast stations.

c B 51. A method according to Claim 38 wherein said step of interspersing ^{as the selected} network programs is accomplished by transmitting said network and said

local programs as television signals having a split-screen presentation.

52. A method according to Claim 38 wherein said step of interspersing ^{the} a network program includes a step of selecting, at each of said broadcast stations, ^{the} a network program out of ^{the} a sequence of network programs to be inserted within a sequence of ^{the} local programs.

53. A method according to Claim 38 wherein said step of communicating identities is accomplished via means of a telephone hub interconnecting a plurality of said receiving stations to said winner-selection station, said evaluating apparatus and a storage unit being located in said telephone hub, said method further comprising evaluating ^{the} responses of ^{the} audience members at the telephone hub by means of said evaluating apparatus, and a step of storing correct answers in the storage unit at the telephone hub during an interval of time subsequent to the presentation of a task to the audience, said step of communicating identities employing data stored within said storage unit.

54. A method for attracting large audiences to program disseminating stations comprising the steps of:

disseminating programs, some of which may differ from others, concurrently from a plurality of stations;

inserting different questions at different times in different ones of said programs, there being audiences for the programs of said stations;

receiving said questions at different times by members of the audiences;

answering said questions at different times by members of said audiences;

determining acceptable answers ^{submitted} by the members of the audiences;

identifying successful members of the audiences who have answered the questions acceptably;

storing acceptable answers from identified members of the audiences in a storage means during an interval of time subsequent to a posing of the questions to the members of the audiences; and

based on information stored in said storage means, entering successful members of the audiences in a sweepstakes or prize event.

55. A method for attracting audiences to broadcast stations comprising the steps of:

transmitting from one or more locations a plurality of task sets at relatively short intervals, a task set including a question and accompanying response criteria defining at least



one acceptable answer;

forming a network of a plurality of TV and/or radio stations, said stations concurrently broadcasting their individually scheduled programs, said programs being at least partially disparate;

receiving said task sets at said stations;

rebroadcasting, by individual ones of said stations, one or more tasks sets at a time convenient to an individual one of said stations;

providing members of the audiences at their locations means for entering an answer to a task;

providing means operatively connected to said entering means for receiving said response criteria and for comparing an entered answer with accompanying response criteria;

determining whether an audience member has entered an acceptable answer; and

entering into a sweepstakes or prize event an audience member who has entered an acceptable answer.

56. A method for attracting audiences to broadcast stations comprising the steps of:

transmitting from one or more locations a plurality of task sets at relatively short

intervals, a task set including a question and accompanying response criteria defining at least one acceptable answer;

forming a network of a plurality of TV and/or radio stations, said stations concurrently broadcasting their individually scheduled programs, said programs being at least partially disparate;

receiving said task sets at said stations;

rebroadcasting, by an individual one of said stations, one or more task sets at a time convenient to the station;

providing members of the audience of said one station at their locations means for entering an answer to a task;

providing means operatively connected to said entering means for receiving said response criteria and for comparing an entered answer with accompanying response criteria, so as to determine whether an audience member has entered an acceptable answer; and

acknowledging an audience member who has entered an acceptable answer in a sweepstakes.

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57. A method for generating very large broadcast audiences comprising the steps of:

providing a first electronic signal

transmitting system comprising a network of stations broadcasting programs to members of the audiences, said stations broadcasting their individually scheduled programs, said stations being equipped to receive and retransmit quiz signals to members of the audiences;

providing a second electronic signal transmitting system for transmitting quiz signals to said stations, a quiz comprising a task, and response criteria accompanying said task defining at least one acceptable response;

formulating at a central location at least one quiz;

transmitting by said second system at least one quiz to said stations, said stations receiving at least one quiz;

retransmitting by a network station a quiz to members of its audience;

providing a response unit with response-entering means to individual members of said audiences, said response unit being capable of receiving and storing response criteria signals, said response unit being capable of evaluating an entered response in accordance with said response criteria and determining an acceptable response;

entering a response to a quiz by a members of said audiences;

evaluating a member's response by the member's response unit to determine an acceptable response;

providing means at a central location for identifying a member having entered an acceptable response;

providing means at said central location for receiving and for storing accepted responses by members of said audiences in a sweepstakes pool;

conveying accepted responses by identified audience members to said sweepstakes pool;

storing identifications of said audience members in said sweepstakes pool;

providing means at a central location for determining at least one winner from among said identified audience members entered in said sweepstakes pool; and

informing said winner of said determination.

58. A method for generating large broadcast audiences comprising the steps of:

organizing a plurality of broadcast stations, including television and/or radio stations, to create a broadcast network;

providing at least one central facility for transmitting electronic signals to said broadcast

stations;

providing at said broadcast stations means to receive and to rebroadcast electronic signals received from a central location;

broadcasting by said stations their regularly scheduled and disparate programs to members of a remote broadcast audience;

receiving said programs by members of the remote audience;

formulating a plurality of task sets, a task set comprising signals conveying a task, including a question, a task set including also response criteria defining at least one acceptable response including an answer and instructions for scoring acceptable responses;

providing response units to individual members of said audience, a response unit comprising means for entering a response to a task by an audience member and means for receiving response criteria signals, said response unit further comprising means for identifying and scoring acceptable responses by individual audience members;

providing means for informing a winning audience member of an acceptable scored response;

sequentially transmitting by at least one of said central facilities signals conveying a

plurality of task sets to said broadcast stations;

receiving task set signals at said broadcast stations;

interrupting programs of individual ones of said broadcast stations to create a time gap between program segments;

rebroadcasting a task set by an individual one of said broadcast stations during said station's time gap;

receiving during a station's time gap, by an audience member, the station's rebroadcast signals conveying a task set;

entering a response to a task by individual ones of said audience members via the response units;

identifying, by said response unit, acceptable responses entered by individual audience members;

storing acceptable responses by means of said response units;

entering acceptable response in a prize event;

informing winning audience members of entrance of an acceptable response in a prize event.

59. A method for generating large broadcast

audiences comprising the steps of:

providing a first electronic signal transmitting system comprising a network of stations broadcasting programs to members of a remote audience, said station broadcasting their individually scheduled programs;

providing second electronic signal transmitting means for transmitting a quiz to said network stations, said stations being equipped to receive and to transmit said quiz signals to members of the remote audience, a quiz comprising a task and response criteria defining at least one acceptable response;

formulating at a central location at least one quiz;

transmitting at least one quiz to said network stations;

receiving at least one quiz at said network station;

retransmitting a quiz, by said network stations, to members of said audience at a point in time determined by individual ones of said network stations, which points in time can vary between stations;

providing to individual members of said remote audience response units for receiving and for

storing response criteria signals, and for entering a response to a quiz by a member of said audience, each of said response units evaluating an entered response in accordance with said response criteria, said response units identifying a member of the audience having entered an acceptable response;

entering a response, by a member of the audience, to a quiz;

evaluating the member's response by a member's response unit;

providing data storage means at a central location;

providing a sweepstakes facility at a central location;

providing a communications link between said response units, said storage means and said sweepstakes facility;

conveying identified audience members to said storage means;

conveying identified audience members to said sweepstakes facility;

determining at least one sweepstakes winner from among identified audience members; and

informing said winner of a determination.

60. A method for attracting large broadcast audiences to individual stations in a network of stations by entering successful respondents to a task in a sweepstakes or prize event, said method comprising the steps of:

forming a network composed of a multiplicity of TV and/or radio stations concurrently broadcasting scheduled and at least partially disparate programs, each of the stations of said network broadcasting its program to members of its audience;

broadcasting a plurality of task sets from a central location, a task set comprising a task and accompanying response criteria defining an acceptable response to the task;

receiving said task sets at said network stations and selecting, at individual ones of said network stations, a task set for retransmission at a time fitting into its program structure;

retransmitting via a network station a selected task set;

receiving a task set by members of the audience of a network station;

providing to each audience member a response unit identified with said audience member, a response unit comprising means for receiving and for storing response criteria, means for entering a

response to a task, means for comparing an entered response to a task to accompanying response criteria, and means for determining whether an entered response is an acceptable response;

entering a response to a task in a response unit, said entering step being accomplished by a member of the audience of a network station desiring to be a respondent;

determining by a response unit whether a respondent's entered response is an acceptable response;

providing a central sweepstakes or prize event facility;

providing a communications link between said response unit and said sweepstakes or prize event facility for conveying the identity of a respondent having successfully responded to a task to said sweepstakes or prize event facility; and

entering a successful respondent in a sweepstakes or prize event.

61. A method for generating a large advertising market, including the combined audiences of a multiplicity of broadcasting stations, said method comprising the steps of:

forming a network composed of a multiplicity of TV and/or radio stations concurrently

broadcasting their scheduled and at least partially disparate programs having different program structures;

broadcasting, via individual ones of said network stations, their respective programs to members of said combined audiences, said network stations broadcasting advertising and/or promotional messages interspersed in their respective programs;

broadcasting a plurality of task sets from a central location, a task set comprising a task and accompanying response criteria defining an acceptable response to a task;

receiving said task sets at said network station;

selecting, at respective ones of said network stations, at least one task set for retransmission at times fitting into program structures of respective ones of said network stations;

retransmitting selected task sets by respective ones of said network stations;

receiving a task set by response units located at locations of members of said audiences, wherein an individual one of said response units comprises means for entering a response to a task, and comparison means for determining whether an entered response is an acceptable response;

entering a response to a task by a member of said combined audiences by use of one of said response units;

determining, at a member's response unit whether an entered response of a member of said audience is an acceptable response; and

entering a member, who has entered an acceptable response, into a sweepstakes.

62. A method for encouraging participation in surveys or polls comprising the steps of:

transmitting electronic signals eliciting responses to questions from a central facility to members of an audience to be polled;

receiving elicitations at locations of said members;

providing means for entering a response to individual ones of said members;

entering responses by individual ones of said members;

providing means for communicating response data from the locations of responding members to a central data storage facility;

communicating said response data to said central facility;

storing members' response data at said central facility;

providing means at said central facility for identifying ^{the} responding members;

entering ^{the} responding members in a sweepstakes;

conducting said sweepstakes to determine at least one winning responding member; and

informing winning members about a result of said sweepstakes.

63. A method for conducting a sweepstakes event for audience members of a plurality of stations broadcasting chronologically disparate ~~program~~ ^{of programs} segments, said method comprising the steps of broadcasting tasks received by stations to their audiences, wherein audience members enter responses and members' responses are compared to response criteria to determine winning members, the improvement comprising the steps of:

selecting, by an individual station, a task from a stream of tasks successively received at relatively short intervals compared to a program, the tasks being chronologically suitable for insertion into said stations programs;

transmitting a selected task by a station;

receiving and responding to a selected task by

audience members of said station;

entering winning members in a sweepstakes; and

determining a sweepstakes winner.

64. A method for conducting a sweepstakes event for audience members of broadcast stations, comprising the steps of:

formulating a task and an accompanying acceptable response;

broadcasting a program by a station, the program including at least one task;

providing an audience member with a telephone having an entering device connected to caller identification means;

responding, by the audience member, to said task by entering a response in the entering device of the telephone connected to the caller identification means;

providing a central evaluation facility having means for receiving an acceptable response and means for comparing a member's entered response with ^{the} an acceptable response to identify a winning member;

storing acceptable responses accompanying each task in said evaluation facility;

communicating entered responses to said evaluation facility;

c comparing ^{the} an entered response to an acceptable response to ¹ determine an acceptable entered response;

c identifying ^{the} a winning member through ^{the} caller identification means;

B entering winning members in a sweepstakes, and randomly determining a sweepstakes winner.

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65. A method for conducting a sweepstakes event for audience members of broadcast stations, comprising steps of:

broadcasting, by a plurality of stations, their individual and disparately scheduled program segments;

supplying to said stations a stream of successive tasks at relatively short intervals as compared to durations of said program segments, each task having an accompanying winning response;

selecting, at an individual station, from the task stream a task chronologically suitable for insertion into that station's program structure for retransmission to the station's audience members;

retransmitting a selected task by a station;

receiving a selected task by an audience member;

responding to a task by an audience member by entering a response in an entering device, the audience member being provided with a response evaluating means;

transmitting winning responses to tasks from a central location to the response evaluating means;

comparing a member's entered responses with a winning response to determine a member's winning entered response;

entering a winning member in a sweepstakes event; and

randomly determining a sweepstakes winner.

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66. A method for conducting a sweepstakes for members of the audiences of broadcast stations, comprising the steps of:

broadcasting, by means of a plurality of stations, individual programs from respective ones of the stations;

conveying mechanically or electronically or optically, to said stations, at least one task to be broadcast to said stations' audiences;

selecting, by an individual one of said

stations, at least one point in time fitting into said station's program structure for broadcasting a task;

broadcasting, by said station, to its audience at least one task at a selected time;

receiving said task by the audience members of said station;

providing to individual audience members a response unit comprising response entering means and means for electronically receiving response criteria defining an acceptable response to an accompanying task, the response unit including a memory for storing response criteria and evaluation means including means for determining an acceptable response by comparing an entered response to accompanying response criteria, said response unit being operable by an identified respondent;

entering a response by an individual member of the audience;

determining an acceptable response by a response unit for a successful respondent;

providing a central storage facility for successful respondents' identifications;

providing a communications link between said response unit and said storage facility;

communicating a successful respondent's identification to said central facility for storing;

entering successful respondents in a sweepstakes or prize event;

determining a winner; and

informing a winning respondent.

67. A method of conducting a sweepstakes for members of the audiences of broadcast stations, comprising the steps of:

broadcasting, by a plurality of stations, individual programs of respective ones of the stations;

transmitting signals conveying response criteria defining an acceptable response to a task;

conveying mechanically or electronically or optically to said stations at least one task to be broadcast to said station's audiences;

selecting, at an individual one of said stations, at least one point in time fitting into said station's program structure for broadcasting a task;

broadcasting, by said station, to its audience at least one task at a selected time;

receiving said task by members of said audience;

entering, by an individual audience member, a response to said task in an entering means;

providing a central response evaluation facility having a memory for storing response criteria electronically received;

electronically programming said memory by transmitting response criteria accompanying a task to an evaluation facility;

providing a communications link between said response entering means and said response evaluation facility;

communicating, via said communications link, to said evaluation facility a respondent's response and identification;

determining, at said evaluation facility, a successful respondent by comparing a respondent's entered response to accompanying response criteria;

entering successful respondents in a sweepstakes;

conducting the sweepstakes by randomly determining a winner; and

informing a winning respondent.

68. A method for conducting a game for members of the audiences of broadcast stations, comprising the steps of:

broadcasting by a plurality of stations individual programs which differ in program content;


conveying to said stations at least one task to be broadcast to said stations' audiences, a task comprising instructional response criteria to determine an acceptable response;

selecting, by an individual one of said stations, at least one point in time fitting into said stations' program structure for broadcasting a task;

broadcasting to the audience of said station a task at a selected time in the course of the program of said station;

providing to individual audience members means for receiving a task, a response entering means, means for receiving instructional response criteria, a memory for storing response criteria, and an evaluation means having means for determining an acceptable response by comparing an entered response to accompanying response criteria; and

associating an entering means identifiably with an audience member.



69. A method for conducting a game comprising the steps of:

broadcasting, by each of a plurality of broadcast stations, a scheduled program, at least some of a plurality of programs broadcast by said plurality of broadcast stations being disparate;

taping a plurality of tasks;

successively transmitting said plurality of taped tasks from a first central facility;

receiving said tasks at each of said broadcast stations;


selecting, at an individual one of said plurality of broadcast stations, a task for retransmission at a convenient time to an audience of said individual one of said broadcast stations;

retransmitting a selected task by said one broadcast station during a program of said individual broadcast station;

receiving a retransmitted task by audience members of said individual broadcast stations;

recording a plurality of response criteria, the response criteria accompanying a task and defining an acceptable response to said task;

providing a second central facility having



means for electronically communicating with individual ones of said audience members and for successively playing back said record of response criteria accompanying each task, said second central facility including means for receiving a response from individual ones of the members of said audience and for identifying an acceptable response by an audience member meeting response criteria, said second central facility also including means for identifying an audience member having entered an acceptable response;

entering a response to a task, by an audience member, in an entering means at a location of the audience member, said entering means being operatively connected by said communication means to said second central facility;

receiving, at said second central facility, a response entered by a member of the audience;

evaluating, at said second facility, an entered response in accordance with said response criteria;

identifying, at said second facility, an acceptable entered response; and

identifying, at said second facility, a member of the audience having entered an acceptable response.

70. A method for conducting a game comprising

the steps of:

broadcasting scheduled programs by individual ones of a plurality of broadcast stations, at least some of said programs being disparate;

recording tasks of a plurality of task sets, a task set including a task, such as a question, and an accompanying response criteria, including an acceptable response;

recording a plurality of response criteria, said response criteria accompanying said tasks;

playing back one of said recorded tasks to said broadcast stations;

selecting, at individual ones of said plurality of broadcast stations, tasks for retransmission to the respective audiences of said broadcast stations at convenient times;

retransmitting, via individual ones of said broadcast stations, selected tasks during their respective programs;

, receiving a retransmitted task by members of an audience of an individual one of said broadcast stations;

providing a central facility having means for electronically communicating with individual ones of members of an audience of said plurality of

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broadcast stations, and playing back recorded response criteria accompanying a task, said central facility having further means for receiving a response from individual ones of the members of said audience of said plurality of broadcast stations, said central facility also having means for identifying an acceptable response by comparing said response with accompanying response criteria and identifying a member of the audience of said plurality of broadcast stations having entered an acceptable response;

entering, by a member of the audience of said plurality of broadcast stations, a response to a task in an entering means located at an individual one of the locations of the members of said audience of said plurality of broadcast stations, said entering means being operatively connected by said communication means to said central facility;

receiving, at said central facility, an entered response of a member of the audience of said plurality of broadcast stations;

identifying, at said central facility, an acceptable entered response; and

informing, via said central facility, a member of said audience of said plurality of broadcast stations having entered an acceptable response.

71. A method for conducting a game comprising the steps of:

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 broadcasting a scheduled program, at each of a plurality of broadcast stations, the programs at at least some of said broadcast stations being disparate;

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 successively transmitting a plurality of task sets at a ~~first central~~ ^{transmitting} facility, each of said task sets including a task and an accompanying response criteria with an acceptable response;

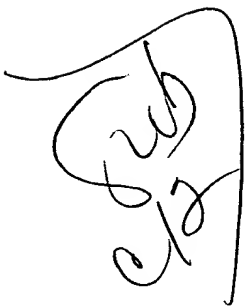
receiving tasks of said task sets at said broadcast stations;

selecting a task, by each of said plurality of broadcast stations, for retransmission to an audience of each of said broadcast station at a convenient time;

retransmitting, via each of said broadcast stations, a selected task during a program of each of said broadcast stations;

receiving a transmitted task by members of the audiences of the respective broadcast stations;

B
 providing ~~a~~ ^{the} second central facility having means for electronically communicating with individual ones of said audience members and receiving response criteria from said first central facility accompanying a task, said second central facility having further means for receiving a response from individual ones of the members of the audiences of the respective stations and for



identifying an acceptable response by an audience member and identifying an audience member having entered an acceptable response;

entering a response by a member of said audience to a task in an entering means at a location of said member, said entering means being operatively connected by said communication means to said second central facility;

receiving an audience member's entered response at said second central facility;

identifying an acceptable entered response at said second central facility; and


identifying, at said second central facility, a member having entered an acceptable response.

72. A method for conducting a game and determining game winners, comprising the steps of:

concurrently transmitting scheduled programs of each of a plurality of first transmitters of stations during a program period;

receiving the scheduled programs of a station, said receiving being accomplished by members of a remote audience tuned to the station;

successively transmitting, by at least one second transmitter, a plurality of task sets at relatively short intervals, as compared to the



duration of a program, during said program period, a task set comprising a task and accompanying response criteria defining an acceptable response thereto;

receiving tasks of said task sets at said stations;

selecting from a plurality of tasks at least one task for retransmission at a time during the program period so as to fit into a chronological sequence of program portions of said station;

retransmitting, via said individual stations, a selected task to a remote audience;

receiving, by members of the remote audience, a retransmitted task from the station to which they are tuned ;

providing response units at members' locations, a response unit including means for entering a member's response, means for receiving response criteria and means for comparing such entered response to accompanying response criteria;

entering, by a member of said audience, a response to a received task in said entering means;

receiving response criteria by said response units; and

comparing a member's entered response to a

Sub C12
task with the accompanying response criteria, so as to determine whether a member's entered response is an acceptable response.

Sub B12
73. A method for broadcasting and rewarding tasks, comprising:

providing facilities for the broadcast transmission of signals conveying a plurality of programs to members of remote audiences;

formatting program contents and program structures for broadcasting by the operators of said facilities, the formatting of said program providing for at least one interruption in the broadcasting of said programs, so as to create at least one break in the continuity of each program structure and at least one time interval between program portions;

synchronizing said interruptions so that said time intervals between portions of all station programs occur at essentially the same time;

broadcasting said programs interrupted by said synchronized time intervals;

receiving said programs by members of remote audiences;

providing means for the transmission of signals conveying a task set to members of said remote audiences;

formatting at least one task set for transmission to members of said remote audiences wherein a task set comprises signals conveying a task including a question and accompanying response criteria defining at least one acceptable response including an answer to a task;

providing to individual members of said remote audiences a response unit comprising means for entering a response to a task and means for receiving and storing response criteria, the response unit further including means for identifying an acceptable response;

broadcasting at least one task set to members of said remote audiences, wherein the broadcasting of said task set occurs essentially during a time interval separating said program portions;

entering, via a response unit, a response to a task by individual ones of said audience members;

identifying an acceptable response by a response unit; and

notifying audience members who have entered an acceptable response.

74. A method for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, comprising the steps of:

broadcasting, via transmitters of a plurality of broadcast stations, a plurality of disparate programs;

sequentially transmitting, via a further transmitter, at least one task and accompanying response criteria;

receiving said task by individual ones of said broadcast stations;

selecting, at one of said broadcast stations, a time for retransmitting ^{the} a task so as to chronologically fit into the program structure of said one broadcast station;

retransmitting, via said one broadcast station, ^{the} a task at the selected time to ^{the} members of the broadcast audience of said one broadcast station; and

^{the} receiving response criteria accompanying said task to permit evaluation of members' responses to the task at locations of said members or a location of a common evaluation facility.

Sub B3 75. A method for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the method comprising:

sequentially transmitting, via a transmitter, a plurality of task sets, a task set comprising a

first portion having a task and a second portion having response criteria accompanying the task for defining at least one acceptable response;

broadcasting disparately structured programs, via a plurality of broadcast stations, to the audiences of respective ones of said plurality of broadcast stations;

receiving, at said broadcast stations, said first and said second portions of each of a plurality of tasks;

selecting, at an individual one of said plurality of broadcast stations, one of said plurality of tasks for retransmission of the task portion of a task set to the audience of the broadcast station;

transmitting, via an individual one of said broadcast stations, said first portion of said task set of the selected task set at a time fitting into a program structure of said individual broadcast station;

receiving, by said audience members, a program and said first portion of a task set transmitted by said individual station, said audience members being tuned to said broadcast stations;

providing means for an entering, by individual audience members, of a response to a task;

providing means for an evaluation of an audience member's response, including means for receiving the second portion of the task set having the response criteria of a transmitted task set;

entering a response, via an audience member, to a task; and

evaluating an entered response to determine whether said entered response is an acceptable response.

76. A method for conducting a game by a plurality of stations broadcasting programs including a task requiring an acceptable response, comprising the steps of:

concurrently broadcasting, via a plurality of broadcast stations, a plurality of disparate programs to members of respective audiences of said broadcast stations during a determined time period;

dividing individual ones of said programs into two or more program segments;

chronologically separating a broadcasting of at least two of said segments so as to create a break in a continuity in respective ones of said programs;

determining at least one time gap between two of said discontinuous segments broadcast by respective ones of said plurality of stations, the

occurrence of said gaps at respective ones of said stations being substantially synchronized;

broadcasting, via said plurality of broadcast stations to the members of the respective audiences during one of said time gaps, a task set comprising electronic signals conveying a task and response criteria defining at least one acceptable response to said task;

providing to individual ones of the members of said respective audiences a response unit, each response unit comprising means for entering a response to a task, means for receiving and for storing response criteria and means for evaluating a member's response to identify an acceptable response;

entering a response, by a member of each of said respective audiences, to a task via said response unit;

evaluating at individual ones of said response units, responses entered by members of respective ones of said audiences;

providing means for informing members of respective ones of said audiences who have entered acceptable responses; and

informing members of individual ones of said audiences who have entered an acceptable response.

77. A method for conducting a game for members of an audience and for entering successful members of the audience in a sweepstakes, the method comprising:

formulating a question to be answered by members of a broadcast audience;

formulating response criteria to accompany a question and to define an acceptable answer to said question;

providing a question to a broadcast station;

selecting, at said station, a time slot fitting into a program structure of said station for broadcasting said question to said broadcast audience;

broadcasting said question, via said station, to said broadcast audience at a selected time;

receiving said question by a member of said broadcast audience;

providing answer entering means to members of said broadcast audience, said entering means being associated with an identified member;

providing at a communications hub, means for obtaining an acceptable answer to a question by a member of said audience by comparing an entered answer to an accompanying response criteria;

providing response criteria accompanying an answer to said hub;

entering an answer to a question by a member of said broadcast audience;

providing means for communicating a member's answer and identification to said hub;

communicating a member's entered answer and identification to said hub;

comparing an entered answer to accompanying response criteria so as to determine an acceptable answer by an identified successful member;

storing the identifications of successful members of said broadcast audience;

entering the identifications of successful members of said broadcast audience in a sweepstakes;

conducting the sweepstakes; and

informing winning members of a result of the sweepstakes.

78. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

transmitters of a plurality of broadcast stations for broadcasting a plurality of disparate programs;

means for sequentially transmitting a plurality of tasks and accompanying response criteria defining an acceptable response;

means at individual ones of said broadcast stations for receiving said tasks and said accompanying response criteria;

means at said individual broadcast stations for selecting one of said tasks, and means for storing a selected task and its accompanying response criteria;

means at said individual broadcast stations for retransmitting a stored task and response criteria at a convenient determined time;

means at locations of said members for receiving a retransmitted task and retransmitted response criteria;

means at individual ones of said members' locations for entering responses to a task; and

means at said members' locations for comparing a response of an individual one of said members to response criteria to determine whether the member's response is an acceptable response.

79. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

a transmitter for sequentially transmitting a plurality of task sets, a task set comprising a first portion providing a task and a second portion providing accompanying response criteria defining at least one acceptable response;

a plurality of broadcast stations for receiving said first portion of a task set and for broadcasting disparately structured programs to members of the audience, wherein an individual one of said plurality of broadcast stations includes means for selecting one of said plurality of task sets for retransmission of the first portion of said task set to audience members at a time fitting into a program structure of said broadcast station;

means provided to audience members for receiving the program and the first portion of a task set transmitted by an individual one of said broadcast stations to which the audience members are tuned;

means provided to the audience members for entering a response to a task;

means for receiving the second portion of a transmitted task set for obtaining the response criteria; and

means for evaluating an entered response of an audience member in accordance with the response criteria to determine whether the entered response is an acceptable response.

80. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

a transmitter sequentially transmitting a plurality of task sets, a task set comprising a first task portion conveying a task and a second task portion defining at least one acceptable response and scoring instructions;

a plurality of broadcast stations for broadcasting disparately structured programs to members of said broadcast audience, said broadcast stations receiving the first and the second portions of said task sets;

wherein individual ones of said broadcast stations include means for selecting one of a plurality of said task sets for retransmission of the task portion of a selected task set to members of said broadcast audience;

individual ones of said broadcast stations retransmitting the first task portion of a selected task set at times fitting into program structures of respective ones of said broadcast stations;

means provided to members of the broadcast audience for receiving the program and the first task portion transmitted by an individual one of said broadcast stations to which said members are tuned;

means for entering responses by individual audience members to a task; and

means for evaluating and for scoring responses of members of said broadcast audience in accordance with said second task portion of a transmitted task set.

81. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

a transmitter for sequentially transmitting a plurality of task sets, a task set comprising a first portion providing a task and a second portion providing accompanying response criteria defining at least one acceptable response;

a plurality of broadcast stations for receiving said task sets and for broadcasting disparately structured programs to members of the audience, wherein an individual one of said plurality of broadcast stations includes means for selecting one of said plurality of task sets for retransmission of the first portion of a selected task set to members of the audience at a time

fitting into a program structure of said one broadcast station;

means provided to audience members for receiving the program and the first portion of the selected task set transmitted by one of said broadcast stations to which audience members are tuned;

means provided to individual audience members for entering responses to a task;

means at a central location for receiving and for storing the second portion of a transmitted task set to obtain response criteria; and

means at said central location for evaluating an entered response of an audience member to determine whether the entered response is an acceptable response.

82. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

a transmitter for sequentially transmitting a plurality of task sets, a task set comprising a first portion providing a task and a second portion providing accompanying response criteria defining at least one acceptable response;

a plurality of broadcast stations for

receiving said tasks and for broadcasting disparately structured programs to members of the audience wherein an individual one of said plurality of broadcast stations includes means for selecting one of said plurality of task sets for retransmission of the first portion of a selected task set to audience members at a time fitting into a program structure of said one broadcast station;

means provided to audience members for receiving the program and the first portion of the selected task set transmitted by one of the broadcast stations to which audience members are tuned;

means provided to individual audience members for entering responses to a task;

means for transmitting responses of audience members to a central location;

means at said central location for receiving and for storing the second portion of a transmitted task set to obtain response criteria; and

means at said central location for evaluating, including a scoring of, an entered response of an audience member to determine whether an entered response is an acceptable response for determination of an award to an audience member.

83. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's

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response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:


a transmitter for sequentially transmitting a plurality of recorded task sets, a task set comprising a first portion providing a task and a second portion providing accompanying response criteria defining at least one acceptable response, said transmitter including a playback device for playing back said recorded task sets;

a plurality of broadcast stations for receiving the first portions of said task sets and for broadcasting disparately structured programs to members of the audience wherein an individual one of said broadcast stations includes means for selecting one of said plurality of task sets for retransmission of the first task portion of a selected task set to members of the audience at a time fitting into a program structure of said one broadcast station;

means provided to individual ones of said audience members for receiving the ^a program and the first portion of the selected task set transmitted by an individual one of said broadcast stations to which audience members are tuned;

means provided to individual audience members for entering a response to a task;

means at a central location for receiving and for storing the second portion of the selected task



set; and

means at said central location for evaluating an entered response to determine whether the entered response is an acceptable response.

84. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

a transmitter for sequentially transmitting recorded tasks of a plurality of task sets, a task set comprising a task and accompanying response criteria defining at least one acceptable response;

a taped record of tasks;

a playback facility operatively coupled to said transmitter for playing back said taped record;

a plurality of broadcast stations for receiving said tasks and for broadcasting disparately structured programs to members of the audience, wherein an individual one of said plurality of broadcast stations includes means for selecting one of said plurality of tasks for retransmission of the task to audience members at a time fitting into a program structure of the one broadcast station;

means provided to audience members for

receiving ~~the~~ programs and tasks transmitted by an individual one of said broadcast stations to which the audience members are tuned;

means provided to individual audience members for entering responses to a task;

a taped record of response criteria directed to at least one of said tasks;

means at a central location for evaluating an entered response to a task in accordance with said response criteria to determine whether the entered response is an acceptable response;

means for communicating an entered response to said evaluation means;

a playback facility operatively coupled to said evaluating means for playing back said response-criteria record to said evaluating means; and

means for informing results of a response to an audience member who has entered an acceptable response.

Sub B14

85. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

a plurality of transmitters for transmitting

disparate programs of a plurality of broadcast stations;

a further transmitter for sequentially transmitting a plurality of tasks and accompanying response criteria defining acceptable responses;

means at individual ones of said broadcast stations for receiving said plurality of tasks;

at said individual stations, means for selecting and means for storing a received task;

means at said individual stations for retransmitting a stored task at a convenient determined time;

means at locations of said audience members for receiving a retransmitted task;

means at said members' locations for entering responses to a task; and

means operatively connected to said entering means for receiving said response criteria and for determining whether a member's response is an acceptable response.

86. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

a plurality of transmitters for transmitting disparate programs of a plurality of broadcast stations;

a further transmitter for sequentially transmitting a plurality of tasks and accompanying response criteria defining acceptable responses;

means at individual ones of said broadcast stations for receiving said plurality of tasks;

means at said individual broadcast stations for selecting and storing a received task;

means at said individual broadcast stations for retransmitting a stored task at a convenient determined time;

means at locations of said audience members for receiving a transmitted task;

means at said members' locations for entering a response to a task;

means at a central location for receiving said response criteria;

mean for transmitting a member's entered response to said central location; and

means at said central location for comparing a member's entered responses to accompanying response criteria to determine whether a member's entered

response is an acceptable response.

87. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

transmitting facilities for sequentially transmitting a plurality of recorded task sets, a task set comprising a first portion providing a task and a second portion providing accompanying response criteria defining at least one acceptable response;

means at each of said transmitting facilities for playing back said recorded task sets;

a plurality of broadcast stations for receiving portions of said tasks and for broadcasting disparately structured programs to members of said audience, wherein an individual one of said plurality of broadcast stations includes means for selecting one of said plurality of tasks for retransmission of the first portion of one of said task sets to members of said audience at a time fitting into a program structure of said individual broadcast station;

means provided to members of said audience for receiving the program and the first portion of each task set transmitted by one of said plurality of broadcast stations, individual members of the audience being tuned to individual ones of said

broadcast stations;

means operable by individual audience members for entering a response to a task;

means for receiving the second portion of a transmitted task set for use of the response criteria of said second portion for evaluating a member's response; and

means for evaluating entered responses of members of the audience to determine whether a response is an acceptable response.

Sub B15

88. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

a transmitter for sequentially transmitting recorded tasks of a plurality of task sets, a task set comprising a task and accompanying response criteria defining at least one acceptable response;

a taped record of tasks;

a playback facility operatively coupled with said transmitter for playing back said taped record;

a plurality of broadcast stations for receiving said tasks and for broadcasting disparately structured programs to members of said

audience, wherein an individual one of said plurality of broadcast stations includes means for selecting one of said plurality of tasks for retransmission of a task to audience members at a time fitting into a program structure of said individual one of the broadcast stations;

means provided to audience members for receiving the program and the task transmitted by an individual one of said broadcast stations to which the audience members are tuned;

means provided to members of the audience for entering responses to a task;

a taped record of response criteria pertaining to one or more of said tasks;

a playback facility for playing back said taped record of response criteria;

means for receiving said response criteria from said playback facility; and

means for evaluating responses entered by audience members in accordance with said response criteria to determine whether individual ones of entered responses are acceptable responses.

89. A system for conducting a game for members of an audience and for entering successful ones of the members in a sweepstakes, the system comprising:

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means at a central location for transmitting by cable or over the air a task to members of an audience, said task calling for an acceptable response defined by response evaluation instructions;

means at locations of said members for receiving said task;

response means operable by a member of said audience for entering a response to a task;

at a central location, an evaluation facility having evaluation means including a memory storing response-evaluation instructions to determine an acceptable response by a successful member of the audience;

means at a central location for transmitting by cable or over the air response-evaluation instructions to said evaluation facility;

means for communicating an audience member's entered response to said evaluation facility;

means for identifying a member through use, by said member, of said response means;

means for storing identifications of successful members;

means for entering identified successful members in a sweepstakes;

Sub C17 means for conducting a sweepstakes to determine at least one winner; and

means for informing winners of said sweepstakes.

Sub B16 90. A system for conducting a sweepstakes for members of the audiences of broadcast stations, comprising:

a plurality of broadcast stations broadcasting their individual programs;

means for conveying to said broadcast stations at least one task for broadcasting by an individual station to its audience at a point in time fitting into a program structure of said individual broadcast station;

means at the locations of individual audience members of said broadcast station for receiving a task of the task set;

means at the locations of members of the audience of said individual broadcast station for entering a response to a task;

a central response evaluation facility having a memory for storing response criteria electronically received, said response criteria defining an acceptable response to an accompanying task;

a communications link between said response entering means and said response evaluation facility for communicating a respondent's response and identification to said evaluation facility;

means at said evaluation facility for determining a successful respondent by comparing a respondent's entered response to accompanying response criteria;

means for entering the identification of successful respondents in a sweepstakes;

means for conducting a sweepstakes by randomly determining a winner; and

means for informing a winning respondent of a result of the sweepstakes.

91. A system for conducting a sweepstakes for members of the audiences of broadcast stations, comprising:

a plurality of broadcast stations broadcasting their individual programs;

means for conveying to said broadcast stations at least one task for broadcasting, by an individual one of said broadcast stations, to its audience at a point in time fitting into a program structure of said one broadcast station;

means at the locations of individual ones of

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said audience members of said individual broadcast stations for receiving a task;

each of
at said members' locations, a response unit operable by an identified audience member comprising means for entering a response to a task, a memory for storing a response criteria electronically received, said response criteria defining an acceptable response to an accompanying task, and means for evaluating a response by comparing an entered task with accompanying response criteria to determine an acceptable response by an identified successful respondent;

a central storage facility for respondent's identification;

a communications link between said response unit and said storage facility for communicating a successful respondent's identification to said storage facility;

means for entering the identification of successful respondents in a sweepstakes;

means for conducting a sweepstakes by randomly determining a winner; and

means for informing a winning respondent of a result of the sweepstakes.

92. A system for conducting a survey or poll comprising:

means for transmitting electronic signals eliciting responses to questions by members of a polling audience at remote locations;

signal receiving means at the locations of said audience members;

means at said members' locations, for entering responses to survey questions;

a central response data storage facility;

means for electronically communicating response data from members' locations to said data storage facility;

means at a central location for identifying responding members;

means at a central location for entering responding members in a sweepstakes;

means for conducting a sweepstakes; and

means for informing responding members of the audience who are sweepstakes winners.

93. A method according to any one of Claims 54, 55, and 60 wherein successful respondents' identifications are stored at a ^{storage} ~~central~~ location prior to being entered in the sweepstakes or prize event, the method further comprising steps by respondents of

granting or withholding authorization to an operator of the sweepstakes or prize event to announce the identities of winners of the sweepstakes or prize event on the air by including such granting or withholding information in an entered response; and

rewarding respondents who have entered an acceptable answer at a higher level of difficulty with two or more entries into the sweepstakes or prize event.

94. A method according to ~~any one of Claims~~
~~56, 66, and 76~~ further comprising a step of erasing
 response criteria in accordance with programming
 signals received from a central location, wherein
 all of said task sets differ, and the program
 structures of stations differ.

95. A method according to any one of Claims
 64, 67, 70 and 71 wherein stations receive tasks
 and response evaluation criteria, further
 comprising a step of

transmitting tasks by broadcast stations to
 their audiences and ~~the step of~~ transmitting, by
 broadcast stations, response evaluation criteria to
 said central facility, wherein there is more than
 one acceptable response to a task, an acceptable
 response is further rewarded with a prize printed
 on a hard copy record such as a monetary coupon,
 and broadcast stations include radio stations and
 over the air and cable TV stations.

Sub B17

96. A method according to any one of Claims 58, 59, 60 and 61 further comprising a step of rewarding acceptable responses with higher scores with two or more entries into the sweepstakes, wherein said entry means includes or are operatively connected to comparing, evaluating, scoring and printing means at the locations of audience members.

C 97. A method according to any one of Claims 56, 66, and 76 further comprising a step of presenting said tasks in a pictorial, schematic, or graphic form understandable by people speaking different languages, wherein said entering means comprises a keypad or a touch screen.

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B 98. A method according to any one of Claims 62 and 66 further comprising a step of providing in ~~said~~ response criteria ^{with} an indication of the time allowed for responding to a task, wherein said central facility is a telephone hub or telephone exchange, and a broadcast transmission includes a plurality of different radio program signals.

99. A method according to any one of Claims 57, 58, 66 and 67 wherein said ^{informing} ~~notifying~~ step includes notifying an audience member who has entered an acceptable response by means of a taped voice message automatically conveyed to said member on a telephone line, the method further comprising

identifying an audience member having entered an acceptable response via automatic number

identification; and

storing the identities of audience members having entered an acceptable response.

100. A method according to any one of Claims 58, ~~62~~ and 70 wherein said step of informing of audience members is done through broadcasting, or is done visually or audibly by a member's response means, and wherein a task set does not exceed a determined time interval in length.

101. A method according to Claim 76 wherein said informing step provides information of audience members, and is done by dispensing hard copy records generated by respective ones of said response units.

102. A method according to Claim 101 wherein each of said hard copy records is a coupon, and the method includes a step of providing a value to a record commensurate with knowledge or skill displayed by an audience member.

103. A method according to Claim 102 wherein said step of determining at least one time gap provides for a plurality of time gaps at each station of said plurality of broadcast stations, said record has monetary value, said hard copy records are numbered or coded by said response units, there are a plurality of said time gaps, there are further task sets to be broadcast during said time gaps, and said task sets differ.

104. A method according to Claim 101 further comprising a step of printing ^{each on said hard copy records} ~~said record~~ in the form of a coupon or voucher, wherein said hard copy record is prenumbered or precoded, and wherein a task question in a sponsored quiz relates to a commercial, products, or an institutional advertisement of the quiz sponsor.

Sub 105 105. A method according to Claim 101 wherein said hard copy record is numbered or coded by the response unit in accordance with instructional signals, a response unit includes means for scoring an acceptable response in accordance with response criteria, programs of said plurality of broadcast stations differ with programs of different ones of said stations providing different television programs, and said method includes a further step of scoring an acceptable response.

Sub 106 106. A method according to any one of Claims 61, 62 and 64 further comprising a step of rewarding an audience member having entered an acceptable response to a task ^{or a question} ~~in addition to an~~ entry into a sweepstakes, with a prize or a printout, such as a monetary coupon, generated at the location of audience member entering the acceptable response.

107. A method according to Claim 73 wherein each of said time intervals is of predetermined duration, the response criteria portion of ^{the} ~~a~~ task set is received by the audience members' response units, the method further comprising a step of

evaluating ^{the} a response by ^{the} a response unit at the location of an audience member.

108. A method according to Claim 73 wherein each of said time intervals has a duration at least equal to a time required for the transmission of a task set and, wherein, in the case of a task set involving a prediction of an event, the method further comprises a step of storing predictions by audience members, and said event takes place before the end of the program broadcast by a station, results are made known followed by a step of entering correct or acceptable responses in a sweepstakes.

109 A method according to Claim 73 wherein each of said time intervals has a duration of the order of 15-120 seconds, there being more than one acceptable response to ^{the} a task, the method further comprising a step of evaluating ^{the} a response by ^{the} a response unit at the location of an audience member.

110 A method according to any one of Claims 57 and 59 further comprising steps of coding or scrambling a quiz prior to said step of transmitting a quiz, and decoding or descrambling of said quiz by an individual network station prior to retransmitting said quiz to its audience.

111. A method according to any one of Claims 57, 58 and 59 further comprising steps of entering an audience member having entered an acceptable

response in a sweepstakes, programs of the various stations differing with respect to program content and/or the chronological structure of program segments;

112. A method according to any one of Claims 54, 55 and 62 further comprising steps of receiving response criteria at a central evaluation hub, and evaluating responses of audience members at said hub.

B 113. A method according to Claim 73 further comprising a step of establishing a time allowed for generating a response, wherein a task set and time allowed do not exceed said at least ^{one} time interval in length. and, wherein said plurality of broadcast facilities includes television and radio stations, there being a further step of rewarding acceptable responses with higher scores with two or more entries in the sweepstakes.

Sub B19 114. A method according to any one of Claims 55, 60 and 61 wherein a time required for transmitting a task set is between 15 and 120 seconds, the method includes a further step of announcing winners of sweepstakes prizes on the air prior to an end of a program presenting a task and, wherein, a task set is part of a sponsored quiz and a task question in the sponsored quiz relates to a commercial, a product, or an institutional advertisement of a quiz sponsor.

115. A method according to any one of Claims

58, 60 and 61 further comprising steps of scoring ^{the} an acceptable response by means of said response unit, and coding response criteria signals.

116. A method according to any one of Claims 71, 72, 73 and 75 wherein transmission of ^{the} a task set is accomplished by transmission over the air or by cable.

117. A method according to Claim 71 wherein, in said transmitting step, said ^{transmitting} first central facility ^{the} transmits successive task sets 24 hours per day, ^{the} tasks of ^{the} a task set being transmitted by satellite.

118. A method according to Claim 69 wherein, in said transmitting step, said first central facility ^{the} transmits successive tasks 24 hours per day, ^{the} tasks being transmitted by satellite.

119. A method according to any one of Claims 58, 59, 60, 61 and 66 wherein ^{the} a response unit includes means for generating a record of ^{the} an acceptable response, and said method includes a further step of generating a record of a member's scored response by means of said response unit.

120. A method according to Claim 67 wherein, in said step of determining at said evaluation facility, said evaluation facility stores first acceptable answer signals received until the receipt of subsequent second acceptable answer signals of a respondent, said second answer signals

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superseding said first answer signals.

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121. A method according to Claim 120 further comprising a step, following a determination of a winning response, of erasing ^{the} response criteria in accordance with programming signals from a central location.

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122. A method according to Claim 54 wherein said step of inserting questions includes inserting a task with one of said questions, said task requiring a prediction of an event by ^{the} audience members, said event taking place before the end of a program broadcast by a station, and wherein outcome data of said event are determined after the occurrence of said event.

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123. A method according to Claim 54 wherein said step of inserting questions includes inserting a task with one of said questions, said task requiring a prediction of an event by ^{the} audience members, said event taking place before the end of a program broadcast by a station, and wherein outcome data of said event are determined prior to the occurrence of said event.

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124. A method according to any one of Claims 60 and 61 wherein said step of broadcasting task sets includes inserting ^{the} ~~a~~ ^{the} task requiring a prediction of an event by ^{the} audience members, said event taking place before the end of a program broadcast by a station, and wherein outcome data of said event are determined after the occurrence of

said event.

C 125. A method according to any one of Claims 60 and 61 wherein said step of broadcasting task sets includes inserting ^{the} a task requiring a prediction of an event by audience members, said event taking place before the end of a program broadcast by a station, and wherein outcome data of said event are determined prior to the occurrence of said event.

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C87 126. A method according to any one of Claims 62 and 66 wherein said central facility is a central telephone facility, the method further comprising a step of electronically debiting participating audience members with amounts charged for use of said central facility and/or crediting participating audience members who have been awarded a monetary prize for an acceptable responses.

127. A method according to Claim 126 further comprising a step of storing identifications of responding successful audience members at a central location prior to being entered in said sweepstakes.

C 128. A method according to any one of Claims 60 and 61 wherein said step of broadcasting task sets includes inserting ^{the} a task requiring a prediction of an event by ^{the} audience members, and said determining step occurs prior to said event taking place.

129. A method according to Claim 128 further comprising a step of including in a responses of audience members a granting or withholding authorization to an operator of the broadcasting from the central location to announce their identities on the air by including such notification in their entered responses.

130. A method according to Claim 129 further comprising a step of conveying ^{the} identities of sweepstakes winners to said network stations for announcing winners on the air prior to the ends of ^{the} their programs.

131. A method according to any one of Claims 60 and 61 wherein said step of broadcasting task sets includes inserting ^{the} a task requiring a prediction of an event by ^{the} audience members, and said determining step occurs following said event having taken place.

132. A method according to any one of Claims 57 and 59 further comprising steps of storing all entered members in the central ^{receiving and} storing means for the duration of a program, and entering all stored members in the sweepstakes near the end of the program and, wherein ^{the} a task is retransmitted by a station prior to or following a commercial, station break or other program interruption.

133. A method according to Claim 66 further comprising steps of storing all entered members in the central facility for the duration of a program,

and entering all stored members in the sweepstakes near the end of the program and, wherein a task is retransmitted by a station prior to or following a commercial, station break or other program interruption.

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134. A method according to any one of Claims 60, 61, 70, ^{the}71 and 72 wherein the response criteria portion of ^{the}a task set is received by a station and retransmitted by said station with the task portion of the task, ^{set}the method further comprising a step of evaluating responses at locations of ^{the}audience members.

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135. A method according to any one of Claims 60, 61, 70, 71 and 72 wherein the task sets of said plurality of task sets are disparate, the method further comprising steps of presenting ^{the}task sets in at least two languages, and including trivial questions within ^{the}a task set wherein the trivial questions relate to commercials, products, or other aspects of an advertiser ~~and/or~~ institutional advertising.

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136. A system according to any one of Claims 80, 81, 82, 83 and 84 further comprising means for coding or scrambling a task portion of ^{the}a task set prior to transmission, and means connecting with said evaluation means for descrambling said task portion.

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137. A system according to any one of Claims 80, 81, 82, ~~83~~ and 84 wherein ~~wherein~~ said

receiving means and said entering means share a common touch-sensitive display screen which serves for presentation of data and for entering responses.

138. A system according to any one of Claims 78, 79, 80 and 81 further comprising means at locations of said audience members for generating a hard copy record containing successful response information.

139. A system according to Claim 138, wherein said record is in the form of a magnetic card or a token having monetary value.

140. A system according to Claim 80 further comprising

means coupled to said transmitter for coding or scrambling a portion of a task set and means at individual ones of said broadcast stations for decoding or descrambling said portion of the task set;

means for presenting a question from a task at remote locations of audience members at least partially in visual form; and

wherein said entering means is operative with an enhanced telephone having visual presentation means.

141. A system according to Claim 85 further

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comprising

means coupled to said further transmitter for coding or scrambling task portions and means at individual ones of said broadcast stations for decoding or descrambling said portions;

means for presenting a question from a task at remote locations of audience members at least partially in visual form; and

wherein said entering means is operative with an enhanced telephone having visual presentation means.

142. A system according to Claim 90 further comprising

means coupled to said conveying means for coding or scrambling task portions and means at individual ones of said broadcast stations for decoding or descrambling said portions;

means for presenting a question from a task at remote locations of audience members at least partially in visual form; and

wherein said response entering means is operative with an enhanced telephone having visual presentation means.

143. A system according to Claim 91 wherein said response unit includes means for outputting a

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record of ^{the} a response and an indication of acceptability of said response.

144. A system according to Claim 143 wherein said record has the form of a token having value, or a discount coupon, and wherein said communications link includes an enhanced telephone incorporating a touch-sensitive display screen.

145. A system according to Claim 144 wherein said coupon carries discounts on a plurality of alternative products, said coupon being suitable for earmarking by a shopper of a preferred product selected from a plurality of products.

146. A system according to Claim 143 wherein said record is a hard copy record.

147. A system according to Claim 146 wherein said hard copy record has monetary value, said system being adapted to dispense said record at a central location.

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148. A system according to any one of Claims 84, 87 and 88 wherein there is a recorded program including said ~~plurality of~~ tasks, and wherein the system includes a central facility for storage of a plurality of acceptable responses to said tasks in a memory.

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149. A system according to any one of Claims 81, 82, ~~83~~ and 84 further comprising means coupled to said entering means and responsive to signals of

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said response criteria for limiting participants to a predetermined period of time for entering ^{the} a response?

150. A system according to any one of Claims 81, 82 and 83 further comprising means at ^{the} a central location coupled to said ^{evaluating} ~~evaluation~~ means for rewarding a responding audience member for an acceptable entered answer by crediting an awarded amount to the account of the responding audience member.

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151. A system according to Claim 150 including means, coupled to said rewarding means, for debiting a participant's account with an amount charged for participating in ^{the} a game.

152. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

transmitters for transmitting disparate programs of a plurality of broadcast stations to a plurality of audiences in different geographic locations;

central transmitting means for sequentially transmitting a plurality of tasks and accompanying response criteria defining acceptable responses;

means at said broadcast stations for receiving said plurality of tasks;


means at individual broadcast stations for retransmitting tasks selected from said plurality of ~~received~~ tasks at convenient determined times in their programs, said tasks being followed by accompanying, machine-readable response criteria, said tasks and response criteria being retransmitted by at least some of said stations at different times;

means at said members' locations for receiving a retransmitted task and response criteria from the station to which they are tuned for the time of retransmission;

means at said members' location^S for entering a response to a task received from one of said stations, and means operatively connected to said entering means for receiving and reading response criteria and means for determining whether a member's response is an acceptable response by comparing an entered response to an acceptable response.


153. A method for conducting a game for members of a plurality of different broadcast audiences in which members' responses to a task are evaluated in accordance with response criteria, comprising the steps of:

by means of a plurality of broadcast stations, transmitting signals concurrently conveying a plurality of different programs having different program structures to different audiences;


 providing to said plurality of stations a plurality of different task sets, a task set including a task and accompanying response criteria defining an acceptable response;

by means of individual ones of said broadcast stations, selecting and transmitting to their respective audiences a task chronologically fitting into a station's program structures, which transmissions by different individual stations occur at different times;

by means of individual ones of said broadcast stations, transmitting machine-readable response criteria accompanying a task;



 receiving by audience members a task at the time of transmission by ^athe station to which they are tuned, different audiences receiving tasks at different times;

providing means to audience members to enter a response to a task;

entering by a member a response to a task in entering means;

providing means for receiving machine-readable response criteria and for comparing an entered response to accompanying response criteria;

receiving response criteria signals by a comparison means; and



comparing a member's response to a task to accompanying response criteria to determine whether an entered response is an acceptable response.

154. A method for generating large broadcast audiences comprising the steps of:

providing a first electronic signal transmitting system comprising a network of stations broadcasting programs to members of a remote audience, said stations broadcasting their individually scheduled programs, which programs may be disparate, said stations being equipped to receive and retransmit quiz signals, a quiz comprising a task and previously determined response criteria defining at least one acceptable response accompanying said task;

providing a second electronic signal transmitting system for transmitting quiz signals to said network stations;

formulating a plurality of quizzes at a central location;

consecutively transmitting by said second system said plurality of quizzes to said network stations;

by means of network stations, receiving and selecting at least one quiz from said plurality of quizzes;

by means of a network station, retransmitting a selected quiz task to members of ^{as} ~~its~~ ^{of said network station} audience at a time determined by said network station;

providing an evaluation station having means for receiving a response to a task entered by a member, means for receiving response criteria signals, means for evaluating an entered response in accordance with said response criteria, and means for identifying an acceptable response;

entering a response to a task by a member of said audience;

evaluating a member's response;

providing means for identifying a member having entered an acceptable response;

providing means at a central data storage location for storing the identifications of members having entered an acceptable response; and

entering identified members in a prize event.

155. A method for conducting a qualifying event for audience members of broadcast stations and for entering winners of said event in a final prize event, said method comprising:

by means of a plurality of stations, broadcasting their individually and disparately scheduled program segments;

supplying to said stations a stream of successive tasks at relatively short intervals, as compared to the duration of a program segment, each task having an accompanying winning response;

selecting from said task stream, by an individual station, a task chronologically suitable for insertion into that station's program structure for retransmission to its audience member;

by means of a station, retransmitting a selected task;

receiving a task by an audience member;

responding by an audience member to a task by entering a response to an entering device;

successively transmitting winning responses to tasks from a central location to response evaluating means;

by means of said evaluating means, comparing a member's entered response with a winning response to determine winning members of said qualifying event;

identifying winning members;

entering winning members in a final prize event; and

determining at least one winner of said final

prize event.

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~~156. A system for conducting a qualifying event and a final prize event for members of a broadcast audience, the system comprising:~~

~~a plurality of transmitters for transmitting chronologically disparate program segments of a plurality of broadcast stations;~~

~~means for sequentially transmitting for use in a qualifying event, a plurality of tasks and predetermined accompanying response criteria defining acceptable responses;~~

~~means at individual ones of said broadcast stations for receiving said plurality of tasks and response criteria;~~

~~means at said individual stations for selecting a received task and response criteria;~~

~~means at said individual stations for retransmitting a selected task and response criteria at a convenient determined time, said response criteria being timed so as to be useless in responding to a task;~~

~~means at said members' locations for receiving a retransmitted task;~~

~~means at said members' location for entering a response to a task, said means being associated~~

~~with an identified member;~~

means operatively connected to said entering means for receiving said response criteria and for identifying qualifying members by determining whether an identified member's response is an acceptable response by comparing a member's entered response to accompanying response criteria;

means for collecting the identifications of qualifying members in a central storage facility; and

means for entering qualified members in a ~~prize event.~~

157. A method for attracting large audiences to program disseminating stations comprising the steps of:

C by means of a plurality of stations, disseminating, ~~such as broadcasting,~~ different programs to different audiences;

by means of said stations, inserting different questions at different times in the programs disseminated by said stations, questions being followed by answer information conveying an acceptable answer;

C receiving by members of the audiences of said stations said questions at ^{the} different times;

providing answering means for individual identified members;

C ^{the} answering said questions by said members at ₁ different times;

providing means for evaluating answers in accordance with said answer information;

C determining acceptable answers by ^{the} ₁ identified members; and

rewarding successful members.

158. A method for attracting large audiences to disseminating stations comprising the steps of:

C a plurality of stations concurrently disseminating, ~~such as broadcasting~~, different programs to a plurality of at least partially different audiences;

inserting different questions to be answered within a prescribed time period at different times in the different programs disseminated by said stations and inserting in said programs accompanying acceptable answers following the insertion of questions;

C receiving, by members of ^{the} ₁ the audiences of said stations, said questions at different times, each question being followed by an answer received after a time interval which renders a knowledge of said

answer useless in answering the question;

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the said members answering said questions at
1 different times;

C
 determining acceptable answers by said members
 by comparing a members' answer to *the* acceptable
 answers; and

identifying successful members who have
 answered acceptably.

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 159. A method for attracting large audiences
 to program disseminating stations comprising the
 steps of:

by means of a plurality of stations,
 concurrently disseminating, different programs;

inserting different questions at different
 times in the different programs disseminated by
 said stations;

receiving, by members of the audiences of said
 stations, questions disseminated by said stations
 at different times;

answering said questions by said members at
 different times;

determining acceptable answers by said members
 at different times;

identifying successful members who have answered acceptably;

following identification, communicating the identifications of successful members to a common storage facility;

storing said identifications received at different times; and

rewarding successful members by entering them in a prize event.

160. A method for attracting large audiences to large and small broadcast stations comprising the steps of:

forming a broadcast network comprising a plurality of television and/or radio stations, some of said network stations having much larger audiences and much larger advertising revenues than other ones of said network stations, at least some of said network stations broadcasting disparate programs;

providing to said network stations a plurality of different questions, each question requiring an affirmative or negative answer;

by means of an individual one of said plurality of network stations, selecting and broadcasting questions at a time fitting into said individual station's program, said times of

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broadcasting varying between at least some of said network stations;

affirmatively or negatively answering a question by members of the audiences of said network stations, said questions being broadcast by ^athe station to which the members are tuned;

accepting or rejecting said members' answer to identify successful members having responded correctly; and

entering all successful members in a common event so that every audience member of every network station, irrespective of the audience size and advertising revenue of said station, has an equal opportunity of being entered in a common event, thereby attracting large audiences to network stations.

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~~161. A method for attracting large audiences to broadcast stations comprising the steps of:~~

forming a broadcast network comprising a plurality of television and/or radio stations, at least some of said network stations broadcasting programs having different chronologic program structures;

consecutively providing to network stations a plurality of tasks, each task having at least two acceptable responses at different difficulty ~~levels;~~

~~selecting and broadcasting, by individual ones~~
of said plurality of network stations, a task at a time fitting into said individual station's program structure, the times of broadcasting tasks by said network stations varying with respect to at least some of said stations;

responding, by members of the audiences of network stations, to a task broadcast by the station to which they are tuned at a difficulty level selected by individual members;

evaluating said members' responses to determine successful members having responded in an acceptable manner;

scoring acceptable responses in accordance with its difficulty level;

using caller identification means to identify successful members; and

awarding successful members one or more entries in a common sweepstakes in accordance with a score of the response.

162. A method for attracting large audiences to broadcast stations comprising the steps of:

forming a plurality of regional broadcast networks, each regional network comprising a plurality of television and/or radio stations, at least some of said network stations broadcasting

~~disparate programs;~~

providing to network stations a plurality of tasks, such task having an acceptable response as defined by response criteria;

by means of an individual one of said plurality of network stations, selecting and broadcasting a task and response criteria at a time fitting into an individual station's program;

responding by members of the audiences of regional network stations to a task broadcast by the station to which they are tuned;

evaluating said members' responses in accordance with response criteria to determine successful members of regional network audiences having responded in an acceptable manner;

identifying successful members;

entering all successful members of a regional network audience in a preliminary prize event, whereby every audience member of every regional network station has an opportunity of being entered in a preliminary prize event, thereby attracting large audiences to regional network stations;

determining at least one preliminary prize event winner; and

~~entering the winners of said plurality of preliminary prize events in a final common prize event.~~

163. In a method for conducting a sweepstakes event for audience members of a plurality of stations concurrently broadcasting disparate programs, said method including the steps of stations broadcasting a task to audiences of the stations, responding by audience members to a task, and comparing members' responses to response criteria ~~defining~~ an acceptable response, the improvement comprising the steps of:

providing stations with a plurality of tasks successively received by stations;

by means of an individual station, selecting a harmonious task suitable for insertion into said station's program;

transmitting a selected task by a station;

receiving a selected task by audience members of said station;

entering a response to said task by audience members by use of comparison means before knowing response criteria;

receiving response criteria by said comparison means;

determining by said comparison means qualified members having entered an acceptable response;

entering qualified members in a sweepstakes;
and

determining a sweepstakes winner.

164. A method for attracting audiences to broadcast stations comprising the steps of:

transmitting from one or more locations a plurality of task sets at relatively short intervals, a task set including at least one question, accompanying response criteria defining an acceptable answer and a time period allowed to answer a question;

forming a network of a plurality of TV and/or radio stations, said stations concurrently broadcasting their individually scheduled programs, said programs being at least partially disparate;

said stations receiving task sets;

individual ones of said stations rebroadcasting one or more task sets at a time or times convenient to the station, at least some of said rebroadcastings occurring at different times, wherein said response criteria are rebroadcast following a time period allowed for answering;

providing to identified members of the

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~~audiences of said stations means for entering an answer to a task;~~

providing means operatively connected to said entering means for receiving said response criteria and for comparing an entered answer with accompanying response criteria, so as to determine whether an identified audience member has entered an acceptable answer; and

~~entering an identified audience member who has entered an acceptable answer in a prize event.~~

165. A method for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

transmitting means sequentially transmitting a plurality of task sets, a task set comprising a task portion including a period of time allowed for responding and a response criteria portion defining at least one acceptable response;

by means of a plurality of stations, broadcasting disparate programs to their respective audiences;

by means of said stations, receiving said task sets;

by means of individual ones of said plurality of stations, selecting one of said plurality of

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task sets for transmission of the task portion of said task set to their audience;

by means of an individual station, transmitting its program, including at a determined time the task of the selected task set, followed by response criteria after a delay which renders said response criteria useless for responding purposes;

receiving the program and task by audience members;

providing means for an entering by individual audience members of a response to a task;

providing means for receiving the delayed response criteria portion of a transmitted task set and for the evaluation of an audience member's response;

entering a response to a task by an audience member; and

evaluating an entered response in accordance with said response criteria to determine whether a response is an acceptable response.

166. A method for conducting a sweepstakes for members of the audiences of broadcast stations, comprising the steps of:

by means of a plurality of stations, broadcasting their individual programs;

mechanically, optically or electronically conveying to said stations at least one task for broadcasting to said stations' audiences, a task having associated with it information defining an acceptable response;

by means of an individual one of said stations, selecting a point in time fitting into said station's program structure for broadcasting a task;

broadcasting, by a station in the course of its program, task and response information at a selected time;

receiving a program and a task by members of said audiences;

providing to audience members response entering means, said entering means being identifiably associated with an audience member;

providing central evaluation means with means for receiving response information, a programmable memory for storing response information, and means for determining an acceptable response operative to compare an entered response to associated response information;

receiving instructional response information at said central evaluation means;

entering a response in an entering means by an

individual member, said entering means being operatively connected to said evaluation means;

communicating said response to ^{said} ~~an~~ evaluation means;

determining by said evaluation means an acceptable response by a successful respondent;

providing a central storage facility for successful respondents' identifications;

providing a communications link between said evaluation means and said storage facility;

communicating successful respondents' identifications to said central facility for storing;

entering successful respondents in a sweepstakes;

conducting a sweepstakes by randomly determining winners; and

announcing sweepstakes winners.

167. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising :

~~means for transmitting recorded task sets, a~~

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~~task set comprising a first task portion and a~~
 second accompanying response criteria portion
 defining at least one acceptable response;

a plurality of stations broadcasting
 disparately structured programs to their respective
 audiences, wherein an individual one of said
 plurality of stations selects a time during its
 program for transmitting the first task portion of
 a task set to its audience, said time having been
 selected so as to fit into its program structure;

means at the locations of audience members for
 receiving the program and first task portion
 transmitted by the station to which they are tuned;

means for entering a response to a task by
 individual audience members;

means at a central location for receiving and
 storing the second response criteria portion of a
 transmitted task set; and

means at said central location for receiving
 and evaluating an entered response in accordance
 with response criteria to determine whether it is
 an acceptable response.

168. A system for conducting a preliminary and
 a final prize event for members of the audiences of
 broadcast stations, comprising ;

~~a plurality of stations broadcasting their~~

~~individual programs, which programs may be~~
disparate;

means for storing at said stations at least one recorded task set of a preliminary event;

means for broadcasting a task by an individual station to its audience at a point in time fitting into said station's program structure;

means at a central location for transmitting response criteria defining an acceptable response to a task;

means at the locations of individual audience members of said station for receiving a program and a task;

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means at said audience members' locations for telephonically entering a response to a task ^{via} ~~at~~ a telephone facility;

means for caller identification;

a central response evaluation facility operatively connected to said telephone facility having means for receiving said response criteria, a programmable memory for storing response criteria, and means for determining a successful respondent in said preliminary event by comparing a respondent's entered response to accompanying ~~response criteria;~~

~~a facility for conducting a final prize event for successful respondents; and~~

means for conveying identifications of successful respondents to said final prize event facility.

169. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising ;

a transmitting facility for sequentially transmitting a plurality of recorded task sets, a task set comprising a task portion and an accompanying predetermined response, said facility including a playback device for playing back said recorded task sets;

a plurality of stations having means for receiving portions of said tasks and for broadcasting disparate structured programs to their respective audiences, wherein an individual one of said plurality of stations selects one of said plurality of task sets for retransmission of the task portion of said task set to its audience at a time fitting into its program structure; and wherein audience members receive the program and task portion transmitted by the station to which they are tuned;

means for entering a response to a task by ~~individual audience members; and~~

~~a central evaluation facility, including means for receiving an entered response and for receiving the response criteria portion of a transmitted task set, and further including a communicating link with said entering means, and means for evaluating an entered response in accordance with response criteria to determine whether said entered response is an acceptable response;~~

170. A method for conducting a game comprising the steps of;

a transmitting a scheduled program by each of a plurality of stations, at least some of said stations' program structures being disparate;

recording tasks of a plurality of task sets, a task set including a task, such as a question, and an accompanying response criteria including an acceptable answer;

recording a plurality of response criteria accompanying said tasks;

playing back and transmitting said recorded tasks from a central location;

playing back and transmitting said response criteria from a central location;

selecting a received task, by an individual one of said plurality of stations, for ~~retransmission to its audience at a convenient~~

~~time;~~

by means of said individual station, retransmitting a selected task during its program;

receiving a retransmitted task, by audience members of said individual station;

providing a central facility having means for communicating with individual ones of said audience members, means for receiving said response criteria, means for receiving a response to a task from individual ones of the members of said audiences, means for identifying an acceptable response by comparison of a member's response with accompanying response criteria, and means for identifying an audience member having entered an acceptable response;

entering a response to a task by an audience member by use of an entering means, said entering means being operatively connected by said communicating means to said central facility;

communicating a member's entered response to said central facility;

by means of said central facility, identifying an acceptable entered response; and

by means of said central facility, informing a ~~member having entered an acceptable response.~~

~~171. A method for conducting a game comprising~~
the steps of:

by means of each of a plurality of broadcast stations, broadcasting a program, at least some of said stations' programs being disparate;

recording a plurality of tasks;

playing back and transmitting said tasks from a central facility;

by means of said broadcast stations, receiving said tasks;

by means of individual ones of said plurality of broadcast stations, selecting a task for retransmission to their audiences at a convenient time;

by means of individual stations, retransmitting selected tasks during programs of the stations, times of retransmission of tasks varying between at least some of said stations;

receiving retransmitted tasks at different times by audience members of said individual stations;

recording a plurality of response criteria, a response criteria accompanying a task and defining ~~an acceptable response to said task;~~

~~playing back and transmitting response~~
 criteria from a central facility, said response
 criteria transmission being synchronized with an
 accompanying task transmission;

providing a common evaluation facility having
 means for receiving response criteria, means for
 communicating with locations of caller-identified
 audience members, means for receiving a response
 from individual ones of said members, means for
 identifying an acceptable response by
 caller-identified audience member, said response
 meeting response criteria;

entering a response to a task by an audience
 member by use of an entering means, said entering
 means being operatively connected through said
 communications means to said evaluation facility;


by means of said evaluation facility,
 receiving an audience member's entered response;

by means of said evaluation facility,
 evaluating an entered response in accordance with
 said response criteria; and

by means of said evaluating facility ,
~~identifying an acceptable response.~~

172. A method for conducting a sweepstakes for
 members of the audiences of broadcast stations,
 comprising the steps of:

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by means of a plurality of stations, broadcasting their individual programs;

mechanically, optically or electronically conveying to said stations at least one task set for broadcasting to said stations' audiences, a task set comprising a task and instructional response criteria to determine and score acceptable responses;

by means of an individual one of said stations, selecting a point in time fitting into said station's program structure for broadcasting a task set;

broadcasting a task set at a selected time by said individual station in the course of its program;

receiving a program and a task by members of said audiences;

providing central evaluation means including means for receiving instructional response criteria, a programmable memory for storing response criteria, means for determining an acceptable response by comparing an entered response to accompanying response criteria and means for scoring by assigning a value to an acceptable response;

providing to audience members response entering means, said entering means being

identifiably associated with an audience member,
said entering means being operatively connected to
said central evaluation means;

entering a response by an individual member;

communicating said response to said evaluation
means;

determining an acceptable response by a
successful respondent;

scoring by assigning a value to an acceptable
response;

providing a central storage facility for
successful respondents' identifications and scored
response results;

providing communication means between said
evaluation means and said storage facility;

communicating successful respondent's
identifications and scored response results to said
central facility for storing;

entering successful respondents and their
scored results in a sweepstakes;

weighting successful respondents' entries in
accordance with scored results;

conducting a sweepstakes randomly determining

winners, the probabilities of random determination being skewed by said weighting; and

announcing sweepstakes winners.

173. A system for conducting a game for members of an audience and for entering successful members in a prize event;

means at a central location for transmitting by cable or over the air, including satellite transmissions, a task to members of an audience, said task calling for an acceptable response defined by response evaluation instructions;

means for entering a response of a member of said audience to a task;

at a central location, a facility having evaluation means including a memory programmable by response evaluation instructions to determine an acceptable response by a successful member;

means at a central location for transmitting by cable or over the air, including satellite transmission, response evaluation instructions to said evaluation facility;

means for communicating a member's entered response to said evaluation facility;

means for identifying a member through said member's use of said responding means;

~~means for storing identifications of~~
successful members in a central storage facility;

means for entering identifications of
successful members from said storage facility in a
prize event;

means for conducting in a prize event to
determine at least one winner; and means for
informing winners of said prize event.

174. A method for conducting a game comprising
the steps of:

by means of each of a plurality of broadcast
stations, broadcasting a scheduled program, at
least some of said station programs being
disparate;

recording and storing a plurality of tasks at
a central location;

by means of an individual one of said
plurality of broadcast stations, requesting a task
for retransmission to its audience at a convenient
time;

transmitting a task said station;

receiving said task by said station ;

by means of said station, retransmitting said
~~task during its program;~~

~~receiving a retransmitted task by audience~~
members of said individual station;

recording and storing a plurality of response criteria at a central location, a response criteria accompanying a task and defining an acceptable response to said task;

transmitting a response criteria accompanying a requested task from a central location;

providing a central evaluation facility having means for receiving response criteria accompanying a requested task, means for receiving a response from individual ones of the members of said audiences, means for evaluating a member's response by comparison to the accompanying response criteria, means for identifying an acceptable response by an audience member; and means for identifying an audience member having entered an acceptable response;

entering a response to a task by an audience member by use of an entering means being identifiably associated with said member, said entering means being operatively connected to said evaluation facility;

by means of said evaluation facility, receiving an audience member's entered response;

by means of said evaluation facility,
~~evaluating an entered response in accordance with~~

~~said response criteria;~~

identifying an acceptable entered response;
and

identifying a member having entered an acceptable response.

175. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

a plurality of transmitters for transmitting disparate programs of a plurality of broadcast stations;

means for sequentially transmitting a plurality of tasks and accompanying response criteria defining acceptable responses;

means at individual ones of said broadcast stations for receiving said plurality of tasks;

means at said individual stations for selecting a task;

means at said individual stations for transmitting a selected task at a time convenient to said station;

means at said member's locations for receiving ~~a transmitted task;~~

~~means at said members' locations for entering~~
a response to a task;

means at a central location for receiving
response criteria accompanying said selected task
at essentially the time of transmission of said
selected task;

means for communicating a member's entered
response to said central location; and

means at said central location for comparing a
member's entered response to accompanying response
criteria to determine whether a member's entered
response is an acceptable response.

176. A method for conducting a preliminary
game for members of an audience and for entering
successful members in a prize event, the method
comprising:

formulating a question of a preliminary game
to be answered by members of a broadcast audience;

formulating response criteria accompanying a
question and defining an acceptable answer to said
question;

mechanically, optically, or electronically
providing a question to a broadcast station;

by means of said station, selecting a time
~~slot fitting into the station's program structure~~

~~for broadcasting said question to the station's audience;~~

by means of said station, broadcasting said question to its audience at the selected time;

receiving said question by a member of said audience;

providing answer entering means to members of said audience, said entering means being associated with an identified member;

providing a communications hub means for determining an acceptable answer to a question by a member of said audience by comparing an entered answer to accompanying response criteria;

mechanically, optically or electronically providing response criteria accompanying an answer to said hub;

entering an answer to a question by a member of said audience;

providing means for communicating a member's answer and identification to said hub;

communicating a member's entered answer and identification to said hub;

comparing at said hub an entered answer to ~~accompanying response criteria to determine an~~

~~acceptable answer by an identified successful member;~~

storing the identifications of successful members at a central storage facility;

entering the identifications of successful members in a prize event;

conducting a prize event to determine a winner; and

informing a winner.

177. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

a transmitter for transmitting one of a plurality of recorded task sets, a task set comprising a first task portion and a second accompanying response criteria portion defining at least one acceptable response, said transmitter including a playback device for playing back a recorded task set at a specified time;

a plurality of stations having means for receiving portions of a task set and for broadcasting disparately structured programs to their respective audiences, wherein an individual one of said plurality of stations predetermines a ~~specified time for retransmitting the first task~~

~~portion of a task set to its audience, said~~
specified time fitting into its program structure,
wherein audience members receive the program and
the first task portion transmitted by the station
to which they are tuned at said specified time;

means for entering a response to a task by
individual audience members;

means at a central location for receiving the
second response criteria portion of a transmitted
task set at essentially said specified time;

means for communicating a response from said
entering means to said central receiving means; and

means at said central location for evaluating
an entered response by comparing it to response
criteria to determine whether it is an acceptable
response.

178. A system for conducting a game for
members of a broadcast audience in which a member's
response to a task is evaluated in accordance with
response criteria, the system comprising:

means for sequentially transmitting a
plurality of task sets, a task set comprising a
task portion and an accompanying response criteria
portion defining at least one acceptable response;

a plurality of stations having means for
~~receiving portions of said task sets and for~~

~~broadcasting disparately structured programs to~~
 their respective audiences, wherein an individual
 one of said plurality of stations selects one of
 said plurality of task sets for retransmission of
 the task portion of said task set to the audience
 at a time fitting into its program structure, the
 times of retransmissions varying between stations,
 wherein audience members receive the program and
 task portion retransmitted by the station to which
 they are tuned;

means for entering a response to a task by
 individual audience members;

means at a central location for receiving the
 response criteria portion of a transmitted task
 set, said response criteria portion being
 synchronized with the task portion transmission;

means for communicating a response from said
 entering means to said receiving means at said
 central location; and

means at said central location for determining
 whether an entered response is an acceptable
 response by comparing an entered response to an
~~acceptable response.~~

179. A method for transmitting tasks by
 stations and rewarding acceptable responses entered
 by members of the audiences of stations, said
 method comprising the steps of:

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concurrently transmitting different program segments by a plurality of stations;

by means of said stations, interrupting their programs at the same time to create a synchronized time gap between said segments;

by means of said stations, transmitting a task during said time gap, a task being followed by response criteria defining an acceptable response to said task, said response criteria transmission being unintelligible to humans;

receiving said task by members of said station audiences;

receiving and reading said response criteria by a response unit associated with an identified audience member, said response unit having means operable by an audience member for entering response, and having means for comparing said response to response criteria to identify a successful audience member having entered an acceptable response; and

rewarding successful audience members.

180. A method for transmitting tasks and rewarding acceptable responses to said tasks, comprising:

providing a plurality of stations for transmitting a plurality of different programs to

~~members of their respective audiences;~~

formatting program contents and program structures by operators of said stations for transmission by the respective stations, the formatting of said programs providing for at least one interruption in the transmission of said programs, so as to create at least one break in the continuity of the program structures and at least one time interval between program portions of all of said stations;

synchronizing said at least one interruption so that time intervals between portions of all transmitted programs of stations occur at essentially the same time;

interrupting stations transmitting said programs by said time intervals of synchronization;

receiving said programs by members of audiences;

formatting at least one task set for transmission to members of said audiences, a task set comprising a task, such as a question, and accompanying response criteria defining at least one acceptable response, such as an answer to a task;

a providing to individual members of said audiences a response unit, ^{said} ~~a~~ response unit ~~comprising means for entering a response to a task,~~

~~means for receiving response criteria, and means for identifying an acceptable response by comparing an entered response to response criteria;~~

transmitting at least one task set to members of said audiences, wherein the transmission of said task set occurs essentially during a time interval separating said stations' program portions;

entering a response to a task in a response unit by individual ones of said audience members;

identifying an acceptable response; and

notifying audience members who have entered an ~~acceptable response.~~

181. A method for conducting a sweepstakes for members of the audiences of broadcast stations, comprising the steps of:

by means of a plurality of stations, broadcasting their individual and disparate programs;

mechanically, optically, or electronically conveying to said stations at least one task set for broadcasting to said stations' audiences, a task set comprising a task and instructional response criteria to determine and score acceptable responses;

selecting a time period fitting into said

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station's program structure by an individual one of said stations for broadcasting a task set;

in the course of said station's program, broadcasting a task set by said station during a selected time period;

receiving a program and a task by members of said audiences;

providing response units to individual audience members, said response units being associated with identified audience members and including response entering means, and means for receiving instructional response criteria;

providing evaluation means, including means for determining an acceptable response by comparing an entered response to accompanying response criteria, and means for scoring a response by assigning a value to an acceptable response;

entering a response by an individual member;

determining an acceptable response by a successful respondent;

scoring an acceptable response;

providing a central storage facility for successful respondents' identifications and scored response results;

providing communications links between said response units and said storage facility;

communicating successful respondents' identifications and scored response results to said central facility for storing;

entering successful respondents and their scored results in a sweepstakes;

weighting successful respondents' entries in accordance with scored results;

conducting a sweepstakes by randomly determining winners, the probabilities of random determinations being skewed by said weighting, and

announcing sweepstakes winners.

182. A method for generating large broadcast audiences comprising the steps of:

providing a first electronic signal transmitting system comprising a network of stations broadcasting program signals to members of respective remote audiences, said stations broadcasting their individual scheduled programs, said station being equipped to receive and retransmit quiz signals to members of their respective audiences;

providing a second electronic signal transmitting system for transmitting a qualifying

~~quiz to said network stations, a qualifying quiz comprising at least one task and response criteria defining at least one acceptable response;~~

formulating at least one qualifying quiz at a central location;

transmitting said quiz to said network stations;

receiving said quiz by network stations;

retransmitting said quiz by network stations to members of their respective remote audiences at a point in time determined by individual ones of said network stations, which points in time can vary from station to station;

providing to individual members of said remote audience response units, each response unit being associated with an identified member, the response unit being capable of receiving and storing response criteria signals, receiving a response to a quiz entered by an identified member of said audience, and evaluating an entered response in accordance with said response criteria to identify winning members of said qualifying quiz;

entering a response to said quiz by a member of the audience of a station;

evaluating said member's response by use of a ~~member's response unit and identifying a winner of~~

~~said qualifying quiz;~~

providing means at a central location for receiving and storing identifications of said winners;

conveying winner's identifications to said storage means;

providing a prize event facility at a central location; and

entering identified winners of said qualifying quiz in said prize event.

183. A method for generating large broadcast audiences comprising the steps of:

combining a plurality of broadcast stations, such as television and radio stations into a broadcast network;

providing a central facility for transmitting electronic signals, including task sets to said broadcast stations;

providing at said stations means to receive and to rebroadcast electronic signals received from said central facility, said stations broadcasting their regularly scheduled and at least partially disparate programs to members of their broadcast audiences;

~~receiving said programs by audience members;~~

formulating a plurality of task sets, a task set comprising a task, at least one acceptable response, and a time period allowed for responding;

providing to individual members of said audience a response unit, a response unit comprising means for entering a response to a task, means for receiving an acceptable response, means for determining acceptable responses by individual audience members, and means for identifying members who have entered an acceptable response;

sequentially transmitting by at least one of said central facilities signals conveying a plurality of task sets to said broadcast stations;

receiving task sets by broadcast stations;

interrupting the programs of individual broadcast stations at a convenient time, so as to create a time gap between program segments;

broadcasting during said station's time gap, by means of an individual broadcast station, a task and time allowed for responding and, following said allowed time, an acceptable response;

receiving the station's rebroadcast task set by an audience member;

~~entering responses to a task by audience~~

~~members in their response units;~~

determining and scoring an acceptable response by a successful audience member by means of a response unit;

identifying a successful audience member; and

~~informing successful audience members.~~

184. A method for generating large broadcast audiences comprising the steps of:

formulating at a central location at least one quiz, a quiz comprising a task and at least one acceptable response to said task;

providing a system comprising a network of stations broadcasting programs to members of a remote audience, said stations broadcasting their individually scheduled and disparate programs, said stations being equipped to receive and broadcast said quiz to members of ^{the} a remote audience;

transmitting at least one quiz from a central location to said network stations;

receiving said quiz by network stations;

by means of network stations, broadcasting said quiz to members of said audience at a point in time determined by individual ones of said network stations, which points in time can vary between

stations, said stations broadcasting an acceptable response in coded form;

receiving said programs and quiz by audience members;

providing to individual members of said audience response units for receiving, decoding, and storing an acceptable response, entering a response to a quiz, comparing an entered response with said acceptable response, and identifying a successful member having entered ^{said} ~~an~~ acceptable response;

entering a response to a quiz by a member of said audience ;

by means of a member's response unit, identifying a successful member having entered an acceptable response;

providing means at a central location for receiving and storing data identifying successful members, said receiving means being operatively connected to said evaluation means;

providing a central sweepstakes facility;

conveying said data identifying successful members to said storage means;

entering successful audience members in a sweepstakes;

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determining at least on sweepstakes winner;
and
informing said winner of said determination.

185. A method for conducting a game by a plurality of stations broadcasting programs including a task requiring a predetermined acceptable response, the method comprising the steps of:

by means of the stations, concurrently broadcasting a plurality of disparate programs to members of the respective audiences of the stations;

dividing individual ones of said programs into two or more program segments by the stations;

chronologically separating the broadcasting of at least two of said program segments so as to create a break in the continuity in said programs;

determining at least one time gap between two discontinuous program segments broadcast by said plurality of stations, the occurrence of said gap between programs being substantially synchronized;

a station broadcasting to its audience members during one of said time gaps a task set comprising a task and an accompanying coded acceptable response to said task;

~~providing to individual ones of said audience members a response unit associated with an identified member, each response unit comprising means for entering a response to a task, means for receiving, decoding, and storing an acceptable response, and means for evaluating a member's response to identify a successful identified member having entered an acceptable response;~~

~~entering a response to a task by members in their response units;~~

~~by means of said response units, evaluating responses entered by members to identify successful members;~~

~~providing means for informing successful members; and~~

~~informing successful members.~~

186. A method for attracting large broadcast audiences to stations in a network of stations by entering successful respondents to a task in a prize event, said method comprising the steps of:

forming a network composed of a multiplicity of TV and/or radio stations concurrently broadcasting their scheduled and at least partially disparate programs;

each of said network stations broadcasting its program to members of its audience;

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making a plurality of task sets available to stations, a task set comprising at least one task, a time period allowed for responding, and an acceptable response to said task;

receiving said task sets at network stations;

by means of a network station, selecting a task set for transmission at a time fitting into the station's program structure;

a network ^{station} transmitting a selected task set to its audience, wherein the acceptable response is transmitted following the time period allowed for responding;

receiving a task and an allowed time period by members of the audience of a network station;

providing to each audience member a response unit identified with said audience member, the response unit comprising means for receiving acceptable responses, means for entering a response to a task and means for determining whether an entered response is an acceptable response;

entering a response to a task in a response unit by a respondent member of said audience;

receiving an acceptable response by said response unit;

determining by the response unit whether a

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respondent's entered response is an acceptable response;

providing a central prize event facility;

conveying the identity of respondents having acceptably responded to a task to said prize event facility; and

entering said respondents in a prize event.

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187. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising :

a recording of a plurality of task sets, a task set comprising a task and accompanying response criteria defining at least one acceptable response;

means for sequentially transmitting recorded tasks of said plurality of task sets;

a playback facility operatively coupled with said transmitting means for playing back said task recording;

a plurality of stations broadcasting disparately structured programs to their respective audiences, wherein an individual one of said plurality of stations receives and selects one of said plurality of tasks for retransmission of the

task to its audience at a time fitting into its program structures, wherein audience members receive a program and task transmitted by a station to which they are tuned;

means for entering a response to a task by individual audience members;

a recording of response criteria accompanying said tasks;

means for transmitting response criteria, including a playback facility for playing back said response criteria recording;

means for receiving said played back response criteria, said receiving means being coupled to means for evaluating an entered response in accordance with said response criteria to determine whether it is an acceptable response; and

means for informing audience members who have entered an acceptable response.

188. A system for conducting a game for members of a broadcast audience in which a member's response to a task is evaluated in accordance with response criteria, the system comprising:

transmitters of a plurality of stations for concurrently transmitting a plurality of at least partially disparate programs to a plurality of at least partially different audiences;

means for providing to said stations a plurality of tasks and accompanying predetermined response criteria defining acceptable responses;

means at individual ones of said stations for selecting and transmitting a selected task and accompanying response criteria at a convenient time, said times of transmission varying between stations;

means at said member's locations for receiving a ^{transmitted} ~~retransmitted~~ task and response criteria;

means for entering responses to ^{the} tasks by ^{the} members; and

connected to members' entering means, comparison means for comparing a member's entered response to ^{the} accompanying response criteria to determine whether a member's response is an acceptable response.

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189. A method for conducting a qualifying event and a subsequent prize event for members of broadcast audiences, comprising the steps of:

by means of transmitters of a plurality of stations, broadcasting a plurality of disparately structured programs to their respective audiences;

by means of central transmitting means, sequentially transmitting a plurality of tasks in a ~~qualifying event and, following each task,~~

~~chronologically spaced response criteria defining an acceptable response to each of said tasks;~~

receiving said tasks at said broadcast stations;

at an individual one of said stations, selecting a time for transmitting a task so as to fit into the station's program structure;

transmitting by said individual station its program including said task to members of its broadcast audience;

receiving said station program and task by members;

responding to a task by members ;

evaluating a member's response by means associated with an identified member and operative in accordance with response criteria following a task, to determine identified winners of the qualifying event; and

entering winners of the qualifying event in a subsequent prize event.

190. A system for transmitting tasks and rewarding acceptable responses to said tasks, comprising:

~~a plurality of stations transmitting a~~

~~plurality of different programs to members of at least partially different audiences;~~

means at each of said stations for interrupting the programs of said stations at the same time and for creating a time gap between program portions of said stations;

means for transmitting to said audiences a task and, following said task transmission, acceptable responses to a task in a form unintelligible to humans;

means at locations of audience members for receiving said program portions and tasks;

means associated with identified audience members for entering a response to a task, for receiving and reading acceptable responses, and for comparing an entered response to an acceptable response, so as to identify successful audience members having entered an acceptable response; and

~~rewarding successful audience members.~~

191. A method for transmitting tasks by stations and rewarding acceptable responses to said tasks provided by the members of the audiences of ^{the} stations, said method comprising the steps of:

by means of a plurality of stations, concurrently transmitting different programs;

interrupting the programs of the stations at the same time to create a synchronized time gap;

C by means of said stations, transmitting a task during said time gap, ^{the} a task being accompanied by a transmission of response criteria defining an acceptable response to said task, said response criteria transmission being unintelligible to humans;

receiving said programs and said tasks by a member of a station audience;

receiving and reading said response criteria by a response unit ^{of} ~~by~~ an identified audience member, said response unit having means for responding by an audience member, and having means for comparing a response to ^{the} response criteria to identify a successful audience member having entered ^{the} an acceptable response; and

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entering successful audience members in a prize event.

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